

# Castes and Tribes of Southern India

Edgar

Thurston. C.I.E



Commentary by

VED from VICTORIA INSTITUTIONS

It is foretold! The torrential flow of inexorable destiny!



# **CASTES AND TRIBES OF SOUTHERN INDIA**

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This is Volume One of Edgar Thurston's Castes and Tribes of Southern India.

In this book, Thurston has attempted to list out the various castes and tribes of the southern parts of the South Asian Subcontinent.

The various attributes of the various castes and tribes, including their family systems, customs, traditional vocation, spiritual beliefs, rituals, death ceremonies, position in the social hierarchy and such other things are delineated in this book.

In the case of some of the castes, very detailed descriptions can be found.

The Commentary given by VED from VICTORIA INSTITUTIONS aims to position this book's actual merits and also to point out certain deficiencies in the general outlook.

The book is great. It was a pioneering attempt at understanding ethnographic differences inside the South Asian subcontinent. However, the most powerful factor that actually influences



ethnographic differences in closely connected populations has not been mentioned or detected. This most powerful factor is the verbal codes in the native feudal languages, and the exact position of a caste or tribe or individual inside these languages.

As of now, a few newly emerged buffoons sitting inside the cosy ambiances of native-English nations have tried to decry the great endeavour of Edgar Thurston. They do not know much and do not understand anything. Even the term 'feudal language' would simply pass through their brain, without connecting to anything inside it.

Some other native jokers have added another individual's name also as the author to this book. That is from the platform of a lowly jingoist aspiration of a population which has nothing on its own to showcase.

Another clown has had the daring to mention that Thurston's writings are bereft of merit because he was a 'British colonial official'.





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## Commentary

VED from VICTORIA INSTITUTIONS



It took a lot of efforts on the part of the erstwhile English administration to improve the quality of the lower classes in the subcontinent.

I think this is my fifth commentary written about certain books of formidable reputation, in the world of history and sociology studies.

The first one was on Travancore State Manual written by V. Nagam Aiya. The second one was Native Life in Travancore by REV. Samuel Matter. The third one was on Mein Kampf by Adolf Hitler. The fourth one was Omens and Superstitions of Southern India by



Edgar Thurston.

However, this last one did go beyond the parameters of a commentary and did sort of become an independent book of mine, titled: [Software codes of mantra, tantra, witchcraft, black magic, evil eye, evil tongue &c.](#)

The way I work on these old time books is to take the text and images from the scanned digital copies of these books, which are available online (mainly archive.org), to create a very readable digital book version in pdf. This effort brings up a lot of seemingly unsolvable problems.

One is that the text does not get copied correct. Or that text recognition does not work properly. So that there are umpteen instances of erroneous words appearing in the copied text.

Next is that there would be missing letters or words. This makes text correcting and proofreading a huge work.





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Then there is the issue of **alphabetic ligatures**. These are combined letters such as œ (c + e), æ (a + e), Æ etc. These old-time books do use them profusely. However, when copying the texts, these words do split. I do not remember as to how I dealt with this issue in my earlier attempts at creating a more readable version of the former four books. However, in this present book, I have made some effort to retain the original **typographic ligatures**.

However, the most formidable issue was that when the digital texts from pdf files are copied, the text more or less mirror the layout of the pdf page. That is, the page becomes a *line-by-line* arrangement of each line in the page, in a list-like manner. So that, practically I had to correct each line and sentence individually. In a book with around more than 100 thousand words, this becomes a huge work.

This was one of the most terrible issues that I had to face in my earlier attempts at this work. However, over the years, I have learnt a lot of





tricks to accomplish various things in the digital world. I experimented with a lot of ideas and came upon a trick that would help me circumvent the problem.

Incidentally, I have written a book on my various information on computer usages, data processing and internet, titled: **VEILED routes to resources in Computers & on the Internet, unVEILED!**. I find that this digital book has received a good rating on Google books.

My work on **Travancore State Manual** was the most tedious and time-consuming one. It was my first attempt at this kind of work. The problem with that book was that the original text I got from online sources was quite corrupted and many words simply invisible. I had to work on more than one source to find the correct word which was missing. Moreover, there were a number of botanical technical words, which I had to painstakingly type out. In fact, in the case of that book, I did a lot of typing work.

When I work towards creating an easily



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readable digital version of these books, the frill benefit that derives upon me is that I get to invariably read the books, and almost without much of an extra effort.

When pondering about what I get in return for this unsolicited-by-anyone works, I think that there is a certain kind of feeling of accomplishment that I derive when the digital book creation is done. Apart from that I come across a lot of information which thitherto I had not known, or seen mentioned in any academic textbooks or other insipid sources of information.

As to financial benefits, though they are deeply expressive of appreciation, the truth is that I do not get much pecuniary benefits. That remains a truth.

Since, I am myself an author, who has done quite pioneering and original research and ponderings on such exceptional themes as Feudal languages, Codes in languages, Software codes of languages, Life and reality,



Codes of reality, Software codes of supernatural events, Software codes of human life, body and mind etc., unusual bits of information do help me much.

## **Edgar Thurston's book**

The writings of Edgar Thurston are not a totally unknown commodity for me. In fact, I have already, as stated above, done a digital book creation of his famous work: Omens and Superstitions of Southern India.

I am totally impressed by him. There are a lot of superlative words that I can mention about him and his works. However, they might be quite supercilious in that, there is no specific need to eulogise Thurston and his writings. (As an aside, I should mention very categorically that I do find most items connected to the English rule in the subcontinent also as of quite superlative character and content.

However, there might be some need to snub certain ingenious idiots who write or quote on





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Wikipedia, words disparaging Thurston and his works, from **some malodorous levels of stale banality**.

The writings of Thurston are quite good in what they attempted to do. No accusation of racism or other foolish definitions can rightfully be used to define his intentions.

I do not intend to write any more words of praise about this writing. My intentions here are to seek out the limitations or location of incompleteness in his writings and understandings. And also to better understand as to what really took place, as he worked on his writing projects.

As has become a sort of signature style in me, I intend to use the impressionistic method to understand many things. For one thing, I was not present in the age he lived. Second, I do not know much about him as a person. Whatever I know about him are merely what I gathered from two of his book, which I presumably have read completely. Even though in a most



perfunctory manner.

Of the Castes and tribes of Southern India, I have read only Part I completely. As to the other parts, I should admit that I have gone through some pages in some of them, when I sought to find some information on certain castes.

This book, I understand **is a very powerful record of the immensity of populations** that had existed in this land.



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A few profound mistakes of an astronomical level

## India and Indians

The first mistake I noted in his writings is the use of the words 'India', 'Indians' etc. When he wrote the words, there was no nation of India. So the mistake was not his.

There was only a subcontinent which was known to outsiders as 'India' in a most unclear manner. It was a name used, maybe, in maritime and other trade circles globally in the hoary past, to denote a location from where certain trade commodities came from. It is not known if anyone knew exactly as to where the boundaries are.

Beyond that whether anyone in the subcontinent in the ancient past were aware that they were in India, or that they were Indians, is also a very pertinent point for pondering.

It must be stressed that this erroneous use of





the word 'India' and 'Indians' has been done by many others of those times. It is quite certain that the people and administrators in Great Britain did have an impression that they were ruling the whole of the subcontinent, even though the actual fact was that British-India consisted of less than half of the geographical area of the subcontinent.

## Continental Europeans versus the English/British

This is another location where Thurston and all other non-native writers should have been more careful. First of all, the term **British**. It consists of two entirely different groups. One the **English** and the other **Celtic language groups** such as the Irish, Scots and the Welsh. Using the term 'British' for both the English as well as the Celtic groups do have the issue of not being accurate.

Next is the use of the term '**European**'. It is a most confusing usage. For again, Continental Europeans and the British are not one group. In



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many ways, culturally, socially and even in nationalistic ambitions, the two entities are not one and the same. In most ways, they are totally opposite to each other. The history of colonialism of the two sides is totally a mismatch in terms of everything, including what happened in the colonial areas.

### Malayalam versus Malabari

There is one item that continues to intrigue me much. It is about the mention of the language of **Malayalam**. The very word **Malabar** used in some of the contemporary writings does have the problem in defining Malabar. Even though the word 'Malabar' was used from external locations to mean the south western coast of the subcontinent in a most vague manner, the fact was that there was and is a very specific geographical location called **Malabar**. It is located south of Canara and Tulu language locations. And north of Travancore and Cochin locations.

In Malabar, there was a traditional language



which was not really Malayalam then, but quite different from it. In fact, I do feel that this language was not connected to either Tamil or Sanskrit antiquity. Then the question of who brought the language there might crop up.

Could it be a language brought in by the north Malabar ([Marumakkathaya](#)) Thiyyas? I have heard a contention that this group of people are immigrants from the **Tian Shan Mountain** regions of **Kazakhstan**. I do not know what the basis of this contention is. However, it does seem that **Shamanistic** spiritual worship phenomenon is in vogue in that location.

Another tell-tale identifying theme could be **Kalari** martial arts. But then, it is mentioned that this art form was a contribution of **Parasurama** to the first group of people he brought in as Brahmins. I find a contention in this book that these Brahmins were later made devoid of Brahminship.

However as of now, Brahmins are not mentioned as connected to Kalari.





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It might be interesting to check whether Kalari or some other martial arts form similar to it is there in Tian Shan region. However, I do not personally think that this is possible. For, as of now, the traditional groups mentioned as associated with Kalari is Thiyyas. May be Nairs also might have some connection with it, as they were the people with policing powers in the locations. Kalari has been taken up by Mappila (Malabar Muslim) groups also. What their antique connection with Kalari is, is not known to me.

However, if Shamanistic ritualism is there in Tian Shan region, then it might be good to check if there is any verbal similarity between Malabari words and the *lingua franca* of that place. Also, if the traditional Thiyya individual names, such as Cheeur, Chirutha, Pirukku, Chathu, Pokken, Kittu, Kanaran etc. have any links to the individual names of those places.

However, it must be admitted that several centuries of subjugation to the lowest of the



feudal classes, that is the Nairs, would have erased much of their cultural antiquity. Whatever remains of their antiquity would be what is found in **Theyyam** and **Thira** rituals, connected various traditional deities such as Muthappan etc.

I wrote this much just to mention one specific item. Malayalam language has, as of now, claimed and achieved a statutory Classical language status. Naturally, the pro-Malayalam lobby would have produced some evidences for this upgrading, which more or less lifts it to the level of Sanskrit.

Since I do not know what the evidences produced were, the question that comes up would be whether the Malayalam lobby could have used the actual antiquity of the Malabari language. And then, there is the question of the Malayalam script.

It is found mentioned in Travancore State Manual that Malayalam is a very recently developed language. It is parents were



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mentioned as Tamil and Sanskrit.

And there was a very specific mention that in Travancore (which is the actual location of Malayalam), there were more or less no Malayalam inscriptions of yore. What were available were mainly Tamil and Sanskrit ones.

In which case, it would be quite interesting to find out as to from where did Malayalam pick up its script. Picking up from other languages is more or less the norm, than the exception in this geographical location.

In this book which you are now reading, there are mentions of **Tulu-Malayalam script**. This is what ticks my curiosity. Tulu locations had no direct connection with the Malayalam locations, which were in Travancore. Tulu location was directly connected to Malabar and Malabari language location.

TOBIAS ZACHARIAS in his English-Malayalam Dictionary published in 1907, had mentioned about the Malayalee craving to





download all Sanskrit words into Malayalam. In the same spirit, could it be that the Malayalam script is also a day-light heist from Malabari language?

I have no passionate aims in supporting Malabari language also. For, it is another terribly feudal language. My aim is simply to speak about the various possibilities. However, it is quite possible that the language experts in Malayalam do have enough information about what really took place and how Malayalam developed. My contentions are simply from an un-studied location. And need not be taken too seriously. I have no interest in this issue, whichever way it turns out.

## Hindu and Hinduism

Third item is the careless use of the term 'Hindu'. It is amply clear from the information given in this book itself that the term 'Hindu' could be attached to only the Brahmanical classes and their appendages. In the case of some of the Brahmin classes, their claims might



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even be flimsy.

The subcontinent was full of people who were not connected to the Hindu spiritual antiquity at all. There are mentions of competing or unconnected spiritual phenomena or worship, in this book. Thurston and even Samuel Mateer do mention something they define as **Devil worship**.

I must admit that I do feel that most of these English/British writer of contemporary times did miss out a on a lot of information on this so-called Devil worship phenomena. I do feel that when viewed from the perspective of this spiritual phenomena, Thurston and others have really missed a lot. This in itself can give some further insight of the certain limitations and undue influence that bore upon the writings of Thurston.

However, I cannot make categorical statements about this, for I have not read the subsequent parts of this book. Yet, there is a lingering feeling in me that what has been



described and defined as Devil worship might be the **Shamanistic spiritual worship** and associated rituals which existed in the southern parts of the subcontinent as a very powerful undercurrent in the social systems, among the lower classes and castes.

It is true that in the current days of insane democratic claims upon anything and everything, the word 'Hindu' has to be forcefully inserted upon every population groups who do not belong to Christian or Islamic fraternity.

### Shamanistic spirituality

There is a very popular spiritual phenomenon in the northern parts of Malabar. That is, at the northern areas of the state of Kerala in India. I find it quite curious that Thurston has not made any mention of this spiritual phenomenon.

Even though in current-day times, the rituals are being connected to popular Hinduism, it is more or less plausible that it is part of a different spiritual system.





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This would take the subject matter directly to the **Marumakkathaya** (matriarchal) **Thiyya** caste of north Malabar. It is seen in this book itself (Part 1), that there are two different manners in which the some references are made about the Thiyyas. And again, in Part VII of this book, a totally different slant has been given to the way this caste has been defined and described.

This totally leads me to think about the various sources that gave the information for the writing of this book. It is almost certain that Thurston did depend upon a number of local natives of the region for the various information.

From my own understanding about the local people and their mental attitude, it is almost quite certain that all such information would be doctored or watered down or selectively amplified to suit the various social, caste, job &c. prejudices and claims.

This book is a highly revealing document of the complexities of the social structure of the subcontinent, which consisted of a huge



number of mutually competing, mutually repulsive and mutually antagonistic populations. On the higher layers, the only similar attitude was a claim by very many of them to be of brahmanic origin or connection.

At the same time, there was also the equally powerful attitude to disclaim the claims of other groups. There are enough and more instances, wherein it is seen that various castes or groups of people or even individuals jump into a higher caste. The basic aim of these endeavours was to disentangle oneself from the various entanglements and strangleholds that a lower caste address would shower on him or her, and on his or her family.

The arrival of the English rule in around half of the locations in the subcontinent did create various kinds of opportunities to many individuals to indulge in many kinds of social manipulations.

One of the very apparent social manipulations was to result in the setting up of an **Ezhava**



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**temple** in Tellichery and in making the Thiyyas there to feel that it is their place of worship. This manipulation could have been facilitated by the actions of traditional Thiyya leadership, who faced the terror of newer generation Thiyyas slipping into the English social ambience. It is possible that certain person from Ezhava ancestry, who gained governmental positions in Mysore state in the British administration, must have colluded with some of the Thiyya officials in higher government official positions.

The above-mentioned possibility is being mentioned without any evidence with me, other than a gut-feeling that this is what happened.

But then what makes the whole issue quite suspicious is that there might not be any mention of these things in this book of Thurston in any of the 7 parts.

When looking at the Thiyya issue, there are three different versions given in his book. The first one is the argument that mentions that the Thiyyas are from Ceylon. The word Thiyya is a





corruption of the word Theevar (people from the island). This is mentioned to claim that Thiyyas and Ezhavas are one and the same. For Ezhavas are mentioned to be from Eezham (Ceylon).

The other mention which would not be given by a person who wrote the above is a mention that Dikshitar Brahmin ‘in appearance somewhat resemble the Nayars or Tiyanas of Malabar’. Here the unmentioned hint is that Nairs and Thiyyas look similar. This is an attitude partial to the Thiyyas, in that there is a suggestion that they resemble the caste just above them.

However, this is not a hint which might be acceptable to the Nairs of Malabar. They would feel that they are degraded by being mentioned as similar to a lower caste.

In another location, (Part VII) of this book, there is a very detailed argument that Thiyyas of north Malabar do not like to be identified as Ezhavas. In fact, they vehemently oppose all



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such suggestions.

In the same location, there is another complication. It is that the Thiyyas of North Malabar do not find the Thiyyas of South Malabar as socially acceptable group. South Malabar Thiyyas are **Makkathaya** (patriarchal) caste. Ezhavas are also Makkathaya.

From certain more such mutually contradictory detailing, I do get a feeling that at least some of the detailed writings on at least some of the castes have been written by some other persons. Thurston must have studied them, and inserted them into the book, after editing them.

Seen from this perspective, the various detailing of the various castes are merely sort of official records, in themselves, or information derived from them. There need not be much of an originality in the contents.

Thurston himself has mentioned the help in this regard which he had got from various



natives of the subcontinent. In many locations, he had merely quoted from the books of others. Many of them are non-native writers, presumably English/British.

These writers also would be facing the same problem in understanding the social inhibitions, strictures, social licences &c. which are all actually embedded in another all-enwrapping item. This item is the local languages. About this I will have to mention something more in detail. I will do that after some time.

The problem with making use of the writings and other contributions of the local natives is that there is enough and more possibility of them being coloured by their own social and caste compulsions, which in turn would be under pressure from the language codes.

### What Thurston missed

Even though the works of Thurston might be pioneering and quite profound, I must mention that he did not understand what he saw and



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observed. That he has seen much, observed much and postulated much on them is quite candidly clear. However, there was something that he did not note down, even though, he must have felt its presence everywhere.

In fact, there is a lot of hints and mention of the factor 'respect' in the book, more or less in a ubiquitous manner. But he did not understand what this meant. That is where this book fails. However, once the reader is told of what this is, the book again comes back as a solid record that substantiates many things, which had remained unmentioned.

It is curious that even though there have been many profound studies on the various aspects of the South Asian subcontinent region, and about the British-India nation, everyone sort of acted blind to a very powerful enwrapping item, which more or less influenced everything in the location.

This item which remained a sort very open and concealed was the nature of the native





languages, and the word-codes therein.

The languages of the subcontinent can cursorily be mentioned as 'feudal languages'. Even though this is not a very comprehensive manner to define the character of the languages therein, it is apt in the sense that pristine-English can be defined as a planar-language.

It is a very vividly clear insight that these feudal languages do have a very degrading or ennobling kind of hierarchy of words that automatically define a person and his associates as dirt or gold.

The real effect of this word-coding cannot be explained away in a cursory manner. It is that these words and their connected usages have a very powerful exertive force on the individual. They have force of impact, and also of that of pushing down or pulling up. In fact, these word-codes can act as hammers, chisels, nails, wedges, twisting force, shearing force, and also give a see-saw kind of effect.



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Since these things have been explained by me in many of my other writings, I need not go into a deeper elaboration here. If the reader is interested, he or she can read the text: **An impressionistic history of the South Asian subcontinent**, on this web-link

[Hammering force of feudal language word-codes](#)

Now, from this location, I can say that almost all the social effects mentioned by Thurston can be explained or elaborated by the code-contents in the native feudal languages.

From this point, I can very easily move on to the pet subject for which Thurston has been famous for. That is, his attempts at **identifying human population differences** as seen in the skull shapes and the measurements of certain distances on them. The so-called **Craniology**.

I have not made a profound attempt at understanding his contentions or what he was trying to find, or to explain. However, based on



my own research work on language codes, I think that he was sort of **barking at the wrong tree**.

Human looks and various other mental and social features are actually encoded in the native language of the person, in powerful connection to the language of the social system in which he or she was embedded.

However, in the South Asian subcontinent, this idea has to be further understood in connection to the **feudal content** in the language codes.

So that each layer of population or caste would have a specific anthropological demeanour and design connected to the location in the language codes, they have been placed in. This placement is directly related to the position of that specific caste in the caste hierarchy.

Beyond that, at a personal level, the language codes would also act powerfully on his or her



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own stature and status within his or her own caste or family or companionship circle or profession.

So, whatever notes and observations that Thurston made on the various caste individuals, is actually a reflection of the design work done by the language codes on that human individual.

It is indeed quite strange that in spite of Thurston being so much talented and skilled in making so many sociological observations, he was unable to detect the factor of language codes influencing human features.

The degradation set upon native-English nations

In fact, feudal languages can literally redesign the social set-up quite powerfully. The terrible social degradation that has currently come upon pristine-English nations has been due to the huge influx of feudal language speakers in those societies. Every human relationship will





be **changed for the worse** in pristine-English nations when the social set-up is very powerfully redesigned by feudal languages.

Beyond that it can very categorically be mentioned that if a few native-English individuals were to work at lower-grade jobs (as defined in feudal languages) under a group of feudal language speakers, for a few generations, then their anthropological features will slowly change to that seen in the lower castes in the south Asian subcontinent. Beyond that there will be sharp changes in the personality features, mental acumen, mental balance, efficiency etc. in the down-placed individuals.

If the down-placed native-English speakers were to have oscillate between their own native language social ambience and that of feudal languages, they will start exhibiting mental problems which might be defined by psychologists and psychiatrists (both of whom know practically nothing about mind and mind



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mechanism) as mental problem or mental disease.

Quite curiously, Thurston himself has made an observation in this regard. See this quote from Castes and Tribes of Southern India Volume 2:

**QUOTE:** Writing concerning the prevalence of insanity in different classes, the Census Commissioner, 1891, states that “it appears from the statistics that insanity is far more prevalent among the Eurasians than among any other class.....’.

The subject seems to be one worthy of further study by those competent to deal with it. **END OF QUOTE**

Eurasians were generally the people who had mixed parentage in those days. Mainly Englishmen as father and native-women as mother. These people were blessed with all kinds of social superiority and great mental standards if they were in a native-English family ambience. If they were totally in a native-feudal



language ambience also, there was not much of a problem. However, if they were living in a mix of both, wherein in the feudal language ambience, they were at the butt end of the suppressive word codes, then the chance for them showing mental problems was quite high.

This is a theme that has to be dealt with quite profoundly. Starting from the peripheral location of feudal language word-codes versus planar English word-codes, it has to move deep into the location of software codes of brain-software, human body and also that of physical reality. It is so a mixed-up domain, which would encompass knowledge of software codes, language codes, codes of reality, human anatomy, mental process, thought process etc.

As of now, there is no such intellectual field of study that can come near to this domain. As to medical and psychiatrist being capable of taking up this question, well, most of them do not know anything about the totally non-physical state of reality that exists with the world of software



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codes.

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## Annotating the textual matter

This book is a sort of repository of structured information on the castes of the southern part of the South Asian subcontinent. As such, it is not expected that many readers would read it from one end to the other. Most of the readers would use the book to gather information on some particular caste or population group.

I have made a cursory reading of the full book. However, I do not remember most of the information. However, as I continued my reading as I worked upon the textual matter and digital book layout, I did take out certain passages or sentences for the purpose of annotating upon them.

I am going to do that here. It is expected that by just going through this part, a casual reader would get a cursory, and yet comprehensive outline of the book.



1. The **Ambalakkarans** and **Muttiriyans** of a village in Musiri taluk wrote a joint petition, protesting against their being classified as Kallans, but nevertheless it is said that the Kallans of Madura will not eat in Ambalakkaran's houses.

**COMMENT:** This issue seems similar to the issue of North Malabar Thiyyas reacting against their being branded as Ezhavas in the official records of the Zamorin of Calicut. As of now, the issue has become real cantankerous, with the Ezhava leadership in Travancore manipulating state government records to subordinate the Thiyyas as sub-caste of the Ezhavas. The major aim of such insidious actions is to enhance the domain of leadership over unconnected populations. There are many political gains in such actions.

2. They admit they are called **Valaiyans**, but repudiate any connection with the caste of that name,



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**COMMENT:** This kind of repulsion to being connected to unacceptable others are there all over the subcontinent.

3. Like most of the temple servant classes, they are inferior to the lower Brahmans, such as the Mussads, and food will not be taken from the hands of most of them even by Nayars.

**COMMENT:** This is a social tragedy at a higher levels, where populations try to keep a distance from the populations below them, and yet are not able to enter into the domain of the classes above them.

4. If the **Perithanakkaran** cannot satisfactorily dispose of a case with the assistance of the usual panchayat (council), it is referred to the higher authority of the Kavarai or Desai Setti, or even to British Courts as a last resource.





**COMMENT:** Courts set up by the English rule had the issue of how to handle problems which were not understandable in pristine-English.

5. He often combines in himself the three useful vocations of hair-dresser, surgeon, and musician.

**COMMENT:** Doctoring was essentially a profession of the barbers even in Europe, I think. However, as of now, such an mention would create a cardiac arrest in the medical professions in India. In fact, I have heard qualified Homeopaths (BHMS) claiming that their profession lost is grandeur just because it had been practised by barbers and such other ‘despicable’ human beings a few decades back. However, the bitter truth is that these ‘uneducated’ Homeopaths had actually been quite good in treating diseases using Homoeopathic techniques.



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6. It may be said without exaggeration that many of the uterine ailments which furnish patients to the maternity wards of the various hospitals in this country are attributable to the rude treatment of the village midwife."

**COMMENT:** It is quite surprising to find this statement in this book. This is a statement given out by current day gynaecologists.

7. The barber who shaves Europeans must not be a caste barber, but is either a Muhammadan or a non-caste man

**COMMENT:** No comments

8. Parasitic skin diseases are said to originate from the application of a razor, which has been used on a number of miscellaneous individuals. And well-to-do Hindus now keep their own razor, which the barber uses when he comes to shave them.



**COMMENT:** It is quite curious that when the AIDS scare spread, this was a much mentioned item to ward off the possibility of the disease spreading at the barber shop.

9. He is also known as **Panditan** or **Pariyari** (doctor), and **Kudimaghan** (son of the ryot).

**COMMENT:** No comment.

10. He must salute his superiors by prostrating himself on his stomach, folding his arms, and standing at a respectful distance.

**COMMENT:** It is about the barber who goes to the houses of the upper castes/class. However, the word 'salute's is not a correct usage, to define actions connected to feudal languages.

11. In North Travancore many families are in possession of royal edicts conferring upon them the title of Panikkar

**COMMENT:** The barber class in Travancore.



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12. Others have the title of Vaidyan or doctor, from the secondary occupation of the caste

**COMMENT:** Again the barber caste in Travancore

13. In theory at least, the makkathayam and marumakkathayam Ambattans may be said to form two distinct endogamous groups, of which the former regard themselves as far superior to the latter in social position.

**COMMENT:** It is curious in that in many other castes, the **Marumakkathayam** classes act out to be superior to the **Makkathayam** caste. For instance, the Marumakkathaya Thiyya did view the Makkathaya Thiyyas (South Malabar) with disdain.

14. Sometimes the makkathayam Ambattans give their girls in marriage to the





marumakkathayam Ambattans, though the converse can never hold good. But, in these cases, the girl is not permitted to re-enter the paternal home, and associate with the people therein.

**COMMENT:** It would certainly be interesting to know the origin of this issue. In most cases, it might be traced to two different populations arriving at the same profession and caste name. The later entrant would love to arrive at a higher caste address, while the group which traditionally holds the caste name would not condone the encroachment of their domain by others who they view as lowly.

15. The barbers not only worship the ordinary Hindu deities, but also adore such divinities as **Murti**, **Maden**, and **Yakshi**.

**COMMENT:** This has connection to a specific social phenomenon seen in many locations in the subcontinent. Among the non-



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Hindu castes/populations, there is a hue of disdain for their own traditional deities. For instance, the Ezhavas were mentioned as having had Madan and Marutha as their own traditional deities. However, as of now, the trend is to connect to the Brahmanical gods and rituals.

16. A niece and nephew are regarded as the most legitimate spouses of a son and daughter respectively.

**COMMENT:** No comment

17. Manu says ' a Brahman should constantly shun worldly honour, as he would shun poison, and rather constantly seek disrespect as he would seek nectar'; and every Brahman youth was required to spend part of his life as a beggar. The Jains and Buddhists held the same views. The Hindu Chatrams and Uttupuras, the Jain Pallis, and the Buddhist Viharas owe their origin to this attitude, they



being originally intended for the support of the mendicant members of these religions. But persons of other than the priestly and religious classes were expected to work for their living, and were not entitled to relief in these institutions.

**COMMENT:** Some kind of undefined monasteries.

18. including (it is said) the burying alive of a goat, are enacted to show that they are dead to the community

**COMMENT:** When women who go astray with men of other castes are expelled from Anuppan caste. There is much connection to the modern usage of 'honour killing' to the feudal content in the native languages.

19. affairs (i.e., a woman, whose husband is too young to fulfil the duties of his position, is



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allowed to consort with his near relations, and the children so begotten are treated as his).

**COMMENT:** No comment, other than to say that there are many other kinds of similar weird content in the antiquity of the subcontinent.

20. In some places in the Telugu country, Tamil Paraiyans, employed as servants under Europeans, horsekeepers, etc., are known as **Arava Malalu** (Malas).

**COMMENT:** Even though, people think that the English officials during the colonial rule were making the native populations of the lands their servants, the truth was that it was a golden opportunity for the very low classes to escape from their slavery under the upper classes of the subcontinent. Serving the upper classes of the subcontinent had a very terrible content in the feudal languages.





21. When the guilt of a woman is proved, and the sanction of the Guru obtained, the husband performs the act of divorce by cutting a pumpkin in two at a place where three ways meet.

**COMMENT:** No comment

22. The Asari of Malabar is the Brahman of the Kammala castes. The Kammala castes generally pollute Nayars by approaching within twelve feet, and Brahmans by coming within thirty-six feet; but an Asari with his measuring rod in his hand has the privilege of approaching very near, and even entering the houses of higher castes without polluting them. This exception may have arisen out of necessity."

**COMMENT:** The asaris or traditional carpenters were extremely skilled persons in architecture. However, in the feudal languages of the location, they were more or less lowly in the eyes of the upper castes.



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23. In a Government office, a short time ago, the head clerk, a Brahman named Rangachari, altered the spelling of the name of a Kammalan from Velayudachari to Velayudasari in the office books, on the ground that the former looked Brahmanical.

**COMMENT:** There is merit in what the Brahman clerk did. For people do use hints to connect to higher classes. As to the higher classes, the spreading of information that someone not from their ranks is connected to them, can despoil their own standards, which they strain to maintain.

24. On the other hand, a former Native official on the Nilgiris writes to me that "though the average Badaga is thrifty and hard-working, there is a tendency for him to be lazy when he is sure of his meal.



**COMMENT:** There is a hidden information in this. It is that in a feudal language social ambience, it is not always a happy moment to go for work. This is due to the stifling atmosphere under supervisors or even colleagues who may not accept one's own level of 'respect'. This is a feeling that spreads along with the spread of feudal languages. I fear that in native-English nations, where the native-English have to work under a feudal languages supervisor or boss or colleagues, he or she would feel the same repulsion for the work place. However, for the other side, working in a native-English nation is the stuff that dreams are made of.

25. On the other hand, the fact (pointed out by Dr. Rivers) that the Badagas are not mentioned in a single one of the Todas' legends about their gods, whereas the Kotas, Kurumbas, and Irulas, each play a part in one or more of these stories, raises the inference



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that the relations between the Badagas and the Todas are recent as compared with those between the other tribes.

**COMMENT:** Just a pointer that the non-Hindu castes do have traditions which have no connection with the Brahmanical antiquity. However, as of now, everyone is slowly edging into the Hindu antiquity, **more or less pushing out the Brahmans from their traditional location.**

26. A critical study of the Badaga dialect might perhaps serve to fix within closer limits the date of the migration. As now spoken, this tongue contains letters (two forms of r for instance) and numerous words, which are otherwise met with only in ancient books, and which strike most strangely upon the ear of the present generation of Canarese. The date when some of these letters and words became obsolete might possibly be traced, and thus aid in fixing the period when the Badagas left the low country.





**COMMENT:** It is quite curious. I had in one of my own books given a hint that words in a language can be used to trace the route by which a population arrived from any specific location. I am sure that is not some new information. However, in Thurston's writings, he is seen to be mentioning it in very clear words.

27. In the old days, it is said, when he visited any village within his jurisdiction, the monegar had the privilege of **having the best women or maids of the place to share his cot** according to his choice.

**COMMENT:** Even though great patriotic academicians might disagree with this information and claim that it is part of a deliberate work to disparage 'Indian' antiquity, the fact is that this was more or less a norm than an exception. I have personally heard these kinds of stories many years ago in some locations.



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28. A quarter of a century ago, a Badaga could be at once picked out from the other tribes of the Nilgiris by his wearing a turban. But, in the present advanced age, not only does the Toda sometimes appear in the national head-dress, but even Irulas and Kurumbas, who only a short time ago were buried in the jungles, living like pigs and bears on roots, honey and other forest produce, turn up on Sundays in the Kotagiri bazar, clad in turban and coat of English cut

**COMMENT:** The truth is the with the arrival of the English rule in around half of the subcontinent, the traditional dresses which were insisted upon as part of a caste hierarchy identification symbol was given the go by.

29. A person of the Badaga section gives the head, as it is called, to an Udaiyar, in token of the superiority of the latter.



**COMMENT:** It is possible that Thurston did not understand the event correctly. All conceding of superiority and inflicting of inferiority are encoded in the verbal dialogues that accompany the actions.

30. it is perhaps significant that no similar sign of respect is shown to Toda elders by the Badagas."

**COMMENT:** Feudal language codes would have encoded the total relative inferiority of the Todas.

31. The Badagas live in dread of the Kurumbas, and the Kurumba constantly comes under reference in their folk-stories. The Kurumba is the necromancer of the hills, and believed to be possessed of the power of outraging women, removing their livers, and so causing their death, while the wound heals by magic, so that no trace of the operation is left.



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He is supposed, too, to have the power of opening the bolts of doors by magic and affecting an entrance into a house at night for some nefarious purpose.

**COMMENT:** In Malabar areas, there was the phenomenon of **Odiyans**, who were reputed to have more or less the same capabilities as mentioned above. Read: **Omens and Superstations of Southern India by Thurston.**

32. If he fails, and if any suspicion is aroused in the mind of the Toda or Badaga that he is allowing the devil to play his pranks instead of loosing his hold on the supposed victim, woe betide him. The wrath of the entire village, or even the whole tribe, is raised against the unhappy Kurumba. His hut is surrounded at night, and the entire household massacred in cold blood, and their huts set on fire. This is very cleverly carried out, and the isolated position of the Kurumba settlements allows of very little clue for identification.





**COMMENT:** This again is mentioned by Thurston in his other book, Omens **and Superstations of Southern India** as being the experience of the **Odiyans**.

33. The following legend, relating to the fire-walking ceremony, is recorded by Bishop Whitehead. "When they first began to perform the ceremony fifty or sixty years ago, they were afraid to walk over the fire. Then the stone image of Mahalinga Swami turned into a snake, and made a hole through the temple wall. It came out, and crawled over the fire, and then went back to the temple. Then their fear vanished, and they walked over the embers. The hole is still to be seen in the temple."

**COMMENT:** Cannot say anything about the mentioned legend. However, fire-walking Shamanistic rituals are there in vogue in north Malabar. For instance, the **Thee Kamundeshwari**. As far as I know, it is not a casual walking over burning fire, but more or



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less a sort of gathering the kindling cinders and throwing them, along with some kind of fast gait over the burning cinders.

34. This same custom of annually killing a sambhar is also observed at other villages on the plateau, and in 1883 and 1894 special orders were passed to permit of its being done during the close season.

**COMMENT:** I do not have much information about the forest rules of British-India, but then there is ample evidence that forest and wildlife were protected much.

35. It is not uncommon to find Badaga women changing husbands, so long as youth and vigour tempt them to do so, and confining themselves eventually to the last individual, after age and infirmity have made their mark, and render such frolics inexpedient."

**COMMENT:** Even though patriotic Indians



would claim of an ancient 'Indian' antiquity of high moral standards, which promoted the stability and invincibility of the family system, most of the evidences are to the contrary. I personally feel that good quality family life prospered with the arrival of the English rule in the subcontinent. Apart from issues of moral ineptitude, there were other issues of social superiors more or less laying their claim upon a female, who is a subordinated person's wife. This does not mean that the wife was unhappy at being violated by the social superior. In many cases, the social superior would be found to be more attractive and her own husband, totally despoiled by the degraded verbal codes.

36. A former Magistrate of the Nilgiris informs me that he tried more than one case, in which a married man filed a complaint against another man for kidnapping or enticing away his wife for immoral purposes. The father of the woman was always charged as an abetter, and





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pleaded that, as no **pariyam** (bride price) had been paid by the husband, though he and the woman lived together as man and wife, no criminal offence could be proved against either the father or the abductor.

**COMMENT:** As commented above, the lawful right of a husband over his wife was compromised in many locations. This was due to various reasons, including the fact the wife's brothers, uncles, aunts, parents and their relatives all had a claim over the female. In fact, if the uncle found her husband not giving adequate 'respect' to them, they would even allow her to be in some other man's hands. This has been very keenly mentioned with regard to the Nairs/Sudra caste of Travancore. However, the females from other castes below them also had somewhat similar experiences.

Beyond all this, was the issue of roaming marauders and other elements also taking possession of the females. The lower castes naturally had to depend upon the feudal





classes such as the sudras to protect them, who had policing powers in their locality. This in turn gave the feudal classes the right to demand servitude from the lower castes.

37. Polygamy is permitted, and the plurality of wives is a gain to the husband, as each wife becomes a bread-winner, and supports her children, and the man makes each wife superintend one department of the day's work.

**COMMENT:** This again is about the Badaga caste.

38. Remarriage of widows is very common, and a widow may marry the brother of her deceased husband.

**COMMENT:** Badaga caste.

39. It is said to be etiquette among the Badagas that, when a woman's husband is away, she should be accessible to her brothers-in-law.



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**COMMENT:** This seems to go beyond any moral or immoral standard that modernity can propose.

40. Instances occur, in which the husband is much younger than his wife, who, until he has reached maturity, cohabits with her paternal aunt's son, or someone whom she may have a fancy for.

**COMMENT:** This also seems to go beyond any moral or immoral standard that modernity can propose.

41. after its performance, divorce can only be obtained through the decree of the panchayat (tribal council).

**COMMENT:** No comment

42. The story goes that Lord Elphinstone, a former Governor of Madras, was anxious to build a residence at Kaiti. But the Badagas,



who had on the desired site a sacred tree, would not part with the land. The Governor's steward succeeded in making the Badaga headman drunk, and secured, for a rental of thirty-five rupees annually, the site, whereon a villa was built, which now belongs to the Basel Mission.!

**COMMENT:** This seem to give a very negative hint about the British manner of getting things done. However, the word 'steward' has to be taken up. Was he a native man of the location? If so, it only reflects the manner in which things get done in the native social system. If the 'steward' was an Englishman, the information goes more or less against the reputation of the English, that they were quite fair in their dealings.

43. In a recent work,\* Mr. A. H. Keane, in a note on the "Dravidian Aborigines," writes as follows. "All stand on the very lowest rung of the social ladder, being rude hillmen without



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any culture strictly so called, and often betraying marked negroid characters, as if they were originally Negroes or Negritos, later assimilated in some respects to their Dravidian conquerors. As they never had a collective racial name, they should now be called, not Dravidians or proto-Dravidians, but rather pre-Dravidians, as more collectively indicating their true ethnical relations. Such are the Kotas, Irulas, Badagas, and Kurumbas."

**COMMENT:** It has been found that even the so-called lowest castes have changed beyond recognition once they had broken out of their lowly strangled social status. Indeed, there is this mention in REV Samuel Mateer's Native Life in Travancore, that when the Missionaries from London Missionary Society went ahead to improve the lower castes in the Travancore Kingdom, they were told these people were not fully human, and that full human intelligence was not possible in them. However, it was seen that when direct training was given by the





English evangelists, these people improved beyond recognition.

**COMMENT:** Basically it is a matter of the hammering done by the feudal language word-codes, which gather the total weight of the overbearing social layers. Once this hammering is removed, the next generation of this people change in physical looks.

44. These are wonderfully tame, the bigger ones feeding fearlessly from one's hand, and even allowing their backs to be stroked. They are protected by the Madgole zamindars—who on several grounds venerate all fish—and by superstitious fears.

**COMMENT:** I have seen such tame fish, in my college days in a place called Aruvikkara near Trivandrum, in Kerala.

45. This Kshatriya descent is, however, not admitted by other castes, who say that Baliyas



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are an offshoot of the Kammas or Kapus, or that they are a mixed community recruited from these and other Telugu castes.

**COMMENT:** Due to the fear of the hammering power of the feudal language word-codes, everyone is desperate to connect themselves to higher echelons of the caste system. In Travancore, Ezhavas very vehemently mention that the Nairs are Sudras. The Nair respond by mentioning the Ezhavas as Chovvans. However, even though the Sudras address might be correct from an antique sense, the Nairs are not lower castes in any demeanour or mental stature. They refuse to accept that they are lower castes. There is a powerful daring in this stance, which more or less makes them devoid of claims for caste-based reservations in jobs and higher education.

By bloodline, Nairs are directly connected to some of the Brahmin class. This is due to the



fact, that Brahmin males were allowed access to Nair females, as an accepted social practise.

This mental feature might be compared with what the Thiyyas did. When the fact that Ezhavas of Travancore-Cochin, were getting such reservations dawned upon them, there were powerful calls for such reservations to allocated to them also. This led to a funny situation in which the superior class Thiyyas of North Malabar areas refused to appeal for such reservations. At the same time, the lowly class Thiyyas' leadership clamoured for reservation.

Once this reservation was given, there was a qualitative change in the standards of the Thiyya population that entered into the government service. In the earlier times, only persons of great acumen in English got in. Now, the opposite kind of people got in.

46. In a letter submitted, from Coimbatore, to Mr. Francis in connection with the census,



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1901, it was stated that "the Baliya people are Kshatriyas of the Lunar Race, as can be proved by a reference to the Bahgavatham, Vishnupuranam, and Brahmmandapuram, etc.

**COMMENT:** The Nairs of Travancore do mention a similar claim that they are Kshatriyas. However, they are mentioned as Sudras in books such as **Travancore State Manual**, **Native Life in Travancore**, and in the writings of Edgar Thurston.

47. The caste is rather a mixed one, for they will admit, without much scruple, persons who have been expelled from their proper caste, or who are the result of irregular unions.

**COMMENT:** It is like the multicultural social system being promoted in Great Britain. Great Britain is not aware of the grave danger it is in. Within a matter of a single decade the nation will become a lowly nation, unless something





quite drastic is done to revoke everything that multicultural has brought in.

48. Vessels made of red sanders wood carry no pollution, and can be used by women during the menstrual period, and taken back to the house without any purification ceremony

**COMMENT:** No comment.

49. For the same reason, Sanyasis (ascetics) use such vessels for doing puja

**COMMENT:** No comment.

50. Jakkulas, among whom it was, at Tenali in the Kistna district, formerly customary for each family **to give up one girl for prostitution.** Under the influence of social reform, a written agreement was a few years ago entered into to give up the practice.

**COMMENT:** There are ample evidence to show that the English rulers have taken much



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pain and effort to save the females from various kinds of tragic experiences, including that of *devadasi* system. However, it has become a fashion of the new entrants to such institutions as BBC etc. to write totally opposite themes about the British rule in around half of the subcontinent.

51. Adapapa. Female attendants on the ladies of the families of Zamindars, who, **as they are not allowed to marry, lead a life of prostitution.** Their sons call themselves Balijas. In some places, e.g., the Kistna and Godavari districts, this class is known as Khasa or Khasavandlu.

**COMMENT:** No comment

52. Into one of the marriage pots are put a pap-bowl, ring, and bracelet, which are picked out by the couple. If the pap-bowl is first got



hold of by the bridegroom, the first-born child will **be a boy** ; if the ring, it will **be a girl**.

**COMMENT:** No comment.

53. In some places, the sister of the bridegroom extracts a promise that his coral (daughter) shall be given in marriage to her pearl (son).

**COMMENT:** No comment.

54. It may be noted, as a little matter of history, that, in 1677, the Court of Directors, in a letter to Fort St. George, offered "twenty pounds reward to any of our servants or soldiers as shall be able to speak, write, and translate the Banian language, and to learn their arithmetic."\*

**COMMENT:** Quite interesting.

55. "The Nayars," he writes, "were, until the British occupied the country, the militia of the



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district. Originally they seem to have been organised into 'Six Hundreds,' and each six hundred seems to have had assigned to it the protection of all the people in a nad or country. The nad was in turn split up into taras, a Dravidian word signifying originally a foundation, the foundation of a house, hence applied collectively to a street, as in Tamil teru, in Telugu teruvu, and in Canarese and Tulu teravu. The tara was the Nayar territorial unit for civil purposes."

**COMMENT:** Even though it is quite possible that the above-mentioned information is correct, further summarisations from this should be done carefully. There have been hints to describe the Nair as some sort of supreme policing officer class. That is, something like the IPS of modern day India. However, that would not be correct in that there is no IPS officers in each and every village. The Nairs can be compared to the present day police constables.





Police constables are quite powerful entities in their local areas and villages.

56. the Malabar Nair chieftain of old had his nad or barony, and his own military class ; and the relics of this powerful feudal system still survive in the names of some of the taluks (divisions) of modern Malabar, and in the official designations of certain Nair families, whose men still come out with quaint-looking swords and shields to guard the person of the Zamorin on the occasion of the rice-throwing ceremony, which formally constitutes him the ruler of the land.

**COMMENT:** It might be true that there would be Nair chiefs as one would define a present day police inspector. However, to give a higher stature than that would create a problem of finding a corresponding level for the Kshatriyas and the various levels of Ambalavasi and the Brahmin class, who are above all of them.



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Even the mention of Nair soldiers coming as guards for the Zamorin does not hint that they are anything above than that of current-day police constables and inspectors.

57. It is necessary to explain that, in both ancient Keralam and Tulu, the functions of the great military and dominant classes were so distributed that only certain classes were bound to render military service to the ruling prince. The rest were lairds or squires, or gentleman farmers, or the labourers and artisans of their particular community, though all of them cultivated a love of manly sports."

**COMMENT:** There is a huge error in trying to compare the native social institutions of the subcontinent with what was there in England. For, there is nothing that can be compared. The English police constable cannot be compared to an Indian constable. There is no item which are in correspondence. Likewise, using such words **as lairds, squires, gentlemen farmers**



etc. to define the social groups in the Subcontinent is utter nonsense. Even the word ‘**gentlemen**’ has no meaning. For, the feudal supervisor classes were not gentlemen as the words is understood in English. They were rude and crude to those who came under them, due to the use of the suppressive feudal language word-codes towards their subordinated classes.

58. I have often come across respectable women of the landed classes like the Bants, Shivallis, and Nairs, managing large landed estates as efficiently as men.

**COMMENT:** Here again, this reflects a mistaken notion that females are socially weak. It is not the truth. To those who happen to come under them, they were quite powerfully suppressive and rude and crude. This is very neatly facilitated by the feudal language word-codes, which is used with the power of a hammer.



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59. That it is a recent forgery is certain ....  
The origin of the book in its present state is well-known ; it is satisfactorily traced to two notorious forgers and scoundrels about thirty years ago, and all copies have been made from the one they produced, I have enquired in vain for an old manuscript, and am informed, on the best authority, that not one exists. A number of recent manuscripts are to be found, but they all differ one from another.

**COMMENT:** No comment

60. As a custom similar to *aliya santana* prevails in Malabar, it no doubt originated before Tuluva and Kerala were separated.

**COMMENT:** It is slightly doubtful if the reason of the origin of this system is clearly mentioned here.





61. Now that the ideas regarding marriage among the Bants are in practice assimilated to a great extent to those of most other people, the national rule of inheritance is a cause of much heart-burning and quarrelling, fathers always endeavouring to benefit their own offspring at the cost of the estate.

**COMMENT:** It is true that with the advent of the English rule in the local areas, it became apparent to the parents that their landed property should rightfully go to their own children and not to that of their nephews and nieces. Maybe this was the reason that **Marthanda Varma**, who was the famous king of Travancore had to fight it out with the sons of his uncle (deceased king). As per the tradition, he was to be the next king, after taking up the inheritance from his uncle. However, in the newer social understandings, the king's sons might have thought it quite correct that they could place their own claim to the throne.



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62. At Hiriadaka, in October, 1907, more than a hundred birds were tethered by the leg to the scrub jungle composed of the evergreen *shrub Ixora coccinea*, or carried in the arms of their owners or youngsters. Only males, from the town and surrounding villages, were witnesses of the spectacle. The tethered birds, if within range of each other, excited by the constant crowing and turmoil, indulged in an impromptu fight.

Grains of rice and water were poured into the mouths and over the heads of the birds before the fight, and after each round. The birds were armed with cunningly devised steel spurs, constituting a battery of variously curved and sinuous weapons. It is believed that the Bhuta (demon) is appeased, if the blood from the wounds drops on the ground. The men, whose duty it is to separate the birds at the end of a round, sometimes receive nasty wounds from the spurs. The tail feathers of a wounded bird are lifted up, and a palm leaf fan or towel is



waved to and fro over the cloacal orifice to revive it. The owner of a victorious bird becomes the possessor of the vanquished bird, dead or alive. At an exhibition of the products of South Canara, during a recent visit of the Governor of Madras to Mangalore, a collection of spurs was exhibited in the class "household implements."

**COMMENT:** Basically, this is just one of the terrible barbarities seen in the barbarous subcontinent by the English rulers.

63. Sometimes, in addition to the flag, there is a pakke or spear on the end of a bamboo covered with strips of cloth, or a *makara torana*, i.e., festooned cloths between two bamboos. The two last are permitted only if the buffaloes belong to a Bant or Brahman, not if they are the property of a Billava.

**COMMENT:** No comment



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64. On one occasion, a dispute arose between two Bants in connection with the question of precedence. One of them brought his own pair of buffaloes, and the other a borrowed pair. If the latter had brought his own animals, he would have had precedence over the former. But, as his animals were borrowed, precedence was given to the man who brought his own buffaloes. This led to a dispute, and the races were not commenced until the delicate point at issue was decided.

**COMMENT:** Precedence is a powerful code in the feudal languages. Just a mere display of it, can create powerful changes in the word codes. The native-English people have no information about this.

65. Under the *aliya santana* system of inheritance, the High Court has ruled that there is no marriage within the meaning of the Penal Code





**COMMENT:** It took a long time for the English judiciary to make a sense of a lot of nonsense in the subcontinent. However, it is dawn upon the administrators that they was indeed something evil in the language codes. But then, with the withdrawal of the Empire from the subcontinent, England is bereft of all such information. Currently England is groping around blindly in the darkness, as its interiors are slowly getting filled with populations it cannot understand.

66. The fictitious marriage prevailing amongst the Nayars is unknown among the Bants, and a wife also usually leaves the family house, and resides at her husband's, unless she occupies so senior a position in her own family as to make it desirable that she should live on the family estate.

**COMMENT:** Even though from a modern day perspective, the *Sambhandam* cohabitation arrangement practised in the Nair families, to



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accommodate a Brahmin male consort for the Nair female, can be mentioned as a *pretence*, it had its own social value. The Nairs and the Brahmins existed beyond the purview of the lower castes to criticise or to demean.

67. Bauri.—There are found in the Madras Presidency nomad gangs of Bauris or Bawariyas, who are described\* as "one of the worst criminal tribes of India. The sphere of their operations extends throughout the length and breadth of the country. They not only commit robberies, burglaries and thefts, but also practice the art of manufacturing and passing counterfeit coin.

**COMMENT:** The subcontinent consisted of a series of unconnected a low-class wild areas, habited by an immensity of mutually unconnected populations.



68. Some of these have given up eating beef, call themselves *Dasa Khodalos*, and claim descent from one Ballioa Doss, a famous Bavuri devotee, who is said to have worked wonders, analogous to those of **Nandan** of the Paraiyan community.

**COMMENT:** No comment

69. At Russelkonda, a woman, when asked if she was a Bavuri, replied that the caste is so called by others, but that its real name is Khodalo. Others, in reply to a question whether they belonged to the Khandi section, became angry, and said that the Khandis are inferior, because they eat frogs.

**COMMENT:** This is a sample of the mutual repulsion which is a fact of life in the subcontinent. People try to connect to presumed higher-ups. At the same time, the presumed higher-ups are desperate to shed



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such links or block such aspirations of connection from those who are lower to them.

70. A man, who is convicted of committing adultery, or eating with a member of a lower caste, is received back into the caste on payment of the fine.

**COMMENT:** Eating with a lower stature person in an uncontrolled ambience, can create a lot of havoc in the word-codes in the feudal language. It can be visualised as a young IPS officer sitting and eating with a lot of constables in a mood of equality, without mindful of the stature difference. Word codes of such indicant words as YOU, HE, HIM, HIS &c. will collapse. Along with this collapse, the whole structure of the police department would be made to wobble.

A formal distance is healthy in a feudal language setting.





People who comment on the dirtiness of the caste system do not think beyond. The basic evil thing is the feudal language. Correction has to be done at this level.

71. The Bavuris do not worship **Jagannathaswami**, or other of the higher deities, but reverence their ancestors and the village goddesses or **Takuranis**.

**COMMENT:** It is an example of the existence of caste populations which were not connected to the Brahmanical antiquity and their deities and gods.

72. Five years after this battle, when Hyder was rising to great eminence, he augmented his Beder peons, and used them as scouts for the purpose of ascertaining the whereabouts of his enemies, and for poisoning with the juice of the milk-hedge (*Euphorbia Tirucalli*) all wells in use by them, or in their line of march.



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**COMMENT:** No comment

73. "In the Kurnool district, they have a bad name, and many are on the police records as habitual thieves and housebreakers. They seldom stoop to lesser offences.

**COMMENT:** No comment

74. Their community provides an instructive example of the growth of caste sub-divisions. Both the Telugu-speaking Boyas and the Canarese-speaking Bedars are split into the two main divisions of Uru or village men, and Myasa or grass-land men, and each of these divisions is again sub-divided into a number of exogamous Bedagas.

Four of the best known of these sub-divisions are Yemmalavaru or buffalo-men ; Mandalavaru or men of the herd ; Pulavaru or flowermen, and Minalavaru or fish-men. They are in no way totemistic. Curiously enough,



each Bedagu has its own particular god, to which its members pay special reverence. But these Bedagas bear the same names among both the Boyas and the Bedars, and also among both the Uru and Myasa divisions of both Boyas and Bedars. It thus seems clear that, at some distant period, all the Boyas and all the Bedars must have belonged to one homogeneous caste.

**COMMENT:** Groups splintering into smaller groups under newer leadership is a code feature of the feudal languages of the subcontinent. However, the minute elements needs to be studied to understand how it works in each particular situation.

75. the Myasa Bedas are the only Hindu class among whom the rite of circumcision is performed,\* on boys of ten or twelve years of age.



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**COMMENT:** It is quite an interesting information. That there was indeed a group of non-Muslim population here in the subcontinent who did practise circumcision. Hindu or non-Hindu?

76. "We used to sleep out on the top of one of the hills on a moonlight night. On the top of every hill round, a Boya was watching for the bears to come home at dawn, and frantic signals showed when one had been spotted. We hurried off to the place, to try and cut the bear off from his residence among the boulders, but the country was terribly rough, and the hills were covered with a peculiarly persistent wait-a-bit-thorn. This, however, did not baulk the Boyas. Telling me to wait outside the jumble of rocks, each man took off his turban, wound it round his left forearm, to act as a shield against attacks from the bear, lit a rude torch, grasped his long iron-headed spear, and coolly walked into the inky blackness of the





enemy's stronghold, to turn him out for me to shoot at. I used to feel ashamed of the minor part assigned to me in the entertainment, and asked to be allowed to go inside with them. But this suggestion was always respectfully, but very firmly put aside. One could not see to shoot in such darkness, they explained, and, if one fired, smoke hung so long in the still air of the caves that the bear obtained an unpleasant advantage, and, finally, bullets fired at close quarters into naked rock were apt to splash or re-bound in an uncanny manner. So I had to wait outside until the bear appeared with a crowd of cheering and yelling Boyas after him."

**COMMENT:** A very telling tale of hunting done.

77. The tame buck does not run away, as he probably would if he had been brought up from infancy to respect the authority of the buck of the herd.



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**COMMENT:** It might be quite interesting to understand the language of the animals. Many of them do have the features of feudal hierarchy encoded in them.

78. Female Bedars who are branded become Basavis (dedicated prostitutes), and are dedicated to a male deity, and called *Gandu Basavioru* (male Basavis). They are thus dedicated when there happens to be no male child in a family ; or, if a girl falls ill, a vow is made to the effect that, if she recovers, she shall become a Basavi.

**COMMENT:** No comment.

79. Five Bedar men come near the vessel after removing their head-dress, surround the vessel, and place their left hands thereon. With their right hands they shovel the food into their mouths, and bolt it with all possible despatch. This ceremony is called *bhuma idothu*, or



special eating, and is in some places performed by both men and women. All those present watch them eating, and, if any one chokes while devouring the food, or falls ill within a few months, it is believed to indicate that the bride has been guilty of irregular behaviour.

**COMMENT:** No comment.

80. It is said that a man may marry two sisters, provided that he marries the elder before the younger.

**COMMENT:** No comment.

81. The bride and bridegroom put their right hands into the pot, and search for the article. Whichever first finds it takes it out, and, showing it, declares that he or she has found it.

This farce is repeated three times, and the couple then take their seats on a cumbly in the centre of the pandal, and await the preparation of the great feast which closes the ceremony.



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**COMMENT:** No comment.

82. A divorced woman is treated as a widow. The remarriage of widows is not permitted, but there is nothing to prevent a widow keeping house for a man, and begetting children by him. The couple would announce their intention of living together by giving a feast to the caste. If this formality was omitted, they would be regarded as outcastes till it was complied with. The offspring of such unions are considered illegitimate, and they are not taken or given in marriage to legitimate children.

**COMMENT:** Live-in-together.

83. —"The Bellaras, or Belleras," Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,\* "are a somewhat higher caste of basket and mat-makers than the Parava umbrella-makers and devil-dancers.





**COMMENT:** There is competition for supremacy even at the lowest rungs of the caste system.

84. Beralakoduva (finger-giving).—A section of the Vakkaligas, among whom the custom of sacrificing some of the fingers used to prevail. (See Morasu.)

**COMMENT:** Sacrificing fingers. What could be their real emotion that makes them do this.

85. The Beri Chettis, or principal merchants, like other Chettis and Komatis, claim to Vaisyas, "but they will not admit that the Komatis are on a par with them, and declare that they alone represent the true Vaisya stock."

**COMMENT:** Again the desperation to occupy the heights alone. And to push out all those who want to share the heights. And also those who try to throw strings on to the heights.



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86. The name Beri, as applied to a sub-division of the Komatis, is said to be a corruption of *bedari*, and to denote those who fled through fear, and did not enter the fire-pits with the caste goddess *Kanyakamma*.

**COMMENT:** No comment.

87. Most of the Beri Chettis are meat-eaters, but some profess to be vegetarians. It is said that there is much dispute between the *Beri Chettis* and the *Komatis* regarding their relative positions, and each caste delights to tell stories to the detriment of the other.

**COMMENT:** It is a very typical situation that describes the actual mental standards in many social interactions, in the subcontinent. However, this mentality is directly connected to the feudal languages, and the cunning placement of the competing entities by others.



88. The great body of the Komatis in the country were not parties to the agreement, and they do not now admit that their inferiority has ever been proved

**COMMENT:** *In sync* with the comment above.

89. According to another version of the legend, during the reign of the Cholas, a water-pandal was erected by the Beris, and the Komatis claimed the right to use it. This was refused on the ground that they were not Vaisyas. The question at issue was referred to the king, who promised to enquire into it, but did not do so. A Viramushti (caste beggar of the Beri Chettis and Komatis) killed the king's horse and elephant. When questioned as to his reason for so doing, he explained that it was to call the king's attention to the dispute, and restored the animals to life.

**COMMENT:** No comment.



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90. To secure the necessary money, they became slaves to a rich Beri woman. Ever since this incident, the Komatis have been the children of the Beris, and their descendants are called **Pillaipuntha Komati**, or Komati who became a son.

**COMMENT:** Enslaving the descendants.

91. But, as the fort (Kanda Kottai, or magnetic fort), in which the Camalar lived, was entirely constructed of loadstone, this attracted, and drew the weapons away from the hands of the assailants. The kings then promised a great reward to anyone who should burn down the fort. No one dared to do this. At length the courtesans of a temple engaged to effect it, and took the pledge of betel and areca, engaging thereby to do so. The kings, greatly rejoicing, built a fort opposite, filled with such kind of





courtesans, who, by their singing, attracted the people from the fort, and led to intercourse.

One of these at length succeeded in extracting from a young man the secret, that, if the fort was surrounded with varacu straw, set on fire, it might be destroyed. The king accordingly had this done, and, in the burning down of the fort, many of the Camalar lost their lives.

**COMMENT:** Oriental cunning.

92. The **Acharapakam Chettis** are known as **Malighe Chettis**, and are connected with the Chettis of this legend. Even now, in the city of Madras, when the Beri Chettis assemble for the transaction of caste business, the notice summoning the meeting excludes the **Malighe Chettis**, who cannot, like other Beri Chettis, vote at elections, meetings, etc., of the Kandasami temple.

**COMMENT:** No comment



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93. **Besthas** employ Brahmans and **Satanis** (or Jangams, if Saivites) for their domestic ceremonies, and imitate the Brahman customs, prohibiting widow remarriage, and worshipping Siva and Vishnu as well as the village deities.

**COMMENT:** Could be a desperate attempt at entering the Brahmanical heights, as slowly the social structure changed to one with the Brahmin at the top. A slow but steady shift from their own traditional deities to that of Brahmanical gods.

94. Some Besthas, when questioned as to the origin of their caste, said that they had no **purandam** to help them. The word used by them is a corruption of **puranam**.

**COMMENT:** Quite interesting in that they admitted that they were not connected to any **puranam** (epics). This is something which most of the newly entered into Hinduism, lower-



castes will not admit. They all nowadays claim the same antiquity as that of the Brahmins.

95. “They employ Brahman priests for their marriages, but Jangams and Satanis for funerals, and in all these ceremonies they follow the lower or Puranic instead of the higher Vedic ritual.

**COMMENT:** The above lines do seem to hint that there is indeed some difference between the Vedic antiquity and that proposed by the puranic antiquity. However, as of now, everything is bundled together as Hinduism.

96. The following account of a criminal class, calling themselves Batturajas or Battu Turakas, was published in the Police Weekly Circular, Madras, in 1881.\*

"They are known to the Cuddapah and North Arcot Police as criminals, and a note is made whenever an adult leaves his village; but, as



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they commit their depredations far from home, and convert their spoil into hard cash before they return, it is difficult to get evidence against them. Ten or twelve of these leave home at once ; they usually work in parties of three or four, and they are frequently absent for months together. They have methods of communicating intelligence to their associates when separated from them, but the only one of these methods that is known is by means of their leaf plates, which they sew in a peculiar manner, and leave after use in certain places previously agreed upon. These leaf plates can be recognised by experts, but all that these experts can learn from them is that Battu Turakas have been the neighbourhood recently.

“On their return to their village, an account of their proceedings is rendered, and their spoil is divided equally among the whole community, a double share being, however, given to the actual thief or thieves. They usually disguise themselves as Brahmans, and, in the search of





some of their houses lately, silk cloths worn only by Brahmans were found together with other articles necessary for the purpose (rudraksha necklaces, salagrama stones, etc.).

“They are also instructed in Sanskrit, and in all the outward requisites of Brahmanism. A Telugu Brahman would soon find out that they are not Brahmans, and it is on this account that they confine their depredations to the Tamil country, where allowance is made for them as rude uncivilized Telugus. They frequent choultries (travellers' resting-places), where their very respectable appearance disarms suspicion, and watch for opportunities of committing thefts, substituting their own bags or bundles (filled with rubbish) for those they carry off.”

To this account Mr. M. Paupa Rao Naidu adds\* that "it is during festivals and feasts that they very often commit thefts of the jewels and cloths of persons bathing in the tanks. They are thus known as Kolamchuthi Papar, meaning



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that they are Brahmins that live by stealing around the tanks. Before the introduction of railways, their depredations were mostly confined to the choultries and tanks."

**COMMENT:** The above lines are illustrative of how the English administrators set up the policing system in the subcontinent. It was a very glorious efforts. All led to waste by Clement Atlee.

97. Concerning the Bhattu Turakas of the North Arcot district, Mr. H. A. Stuart writes\* that "a few of this very intelligent and educated criminal class arc found in the north-west of the Chendragiri taluk, and in the north of Punganur. They are really Muhammadans, but never worship according to the rules of that religion, and know little about its tenets. They have no employment save cheating, and in this they are incomparably clever. They speak several languages with perfect fluency, have often studied Sanskrit, and are able to personate any



caste. Having marked down a well-to-do householder, they take an opportunity of entering his service, and succeed at last in gaining his confidence. They then abuse it by absconding with what they can lay hands upon. They often take to false coining and forgery, pretend to know medicine, to have the power of making gold or precious stones, or of turning currency notes into others of higher value."

**COMMENT:** Quite interesting. In fact, it is indeed a very fabulous description.

98. Lights may not be blown out with the breath, or otherwise extinguished by members of the **Dhippo** sept ; and they do not light their lamps unless they are **madi**, i.e., wearing silk cloths, or cloths washed and dried after bathing.

**COMMENT:** No comment.



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99. **Bilimagga**.—The Bilimagga weavers of South Canara, who speak a very corrupt form of Tamil, must not be confused with the Bilimaggas of Mysore, whose mother-tongue is Canarese.

**COMMENT:** No comment.

100. In some places the Bilimaggas of South Canara call themselves Padma Sales, but they have no connection with the Padma Sale caste.

**COMMENT:** No comment.

101. Marriage of girls before puberty is the rule, and any girl who attains maturity without being married runs the risk of losing her caste.

**COMMENT:** No comment.

102. **Billava**.—The Billavas are the Tulu-speaking toddy-drawers of the South Canara district. It is noted, in the Manual, that they are





"the numerically largest caste in the district, and form close upon one-fifth of the total population. The derivation of the word Billava, as commonly accepted in the district, is that it is a contraction of Billinavaru, bowmen, and that the name was given as the men of that caste were formerly largely employed as bowmen by the ancient native rulers of the district.

There is, however, no evidence whatever, direct or indirect, to show that the men of the toddy-drawing caste were in fact so employed. It is well known that, both before and after the Christian era, there were invasions and occupations of the northern part of Ceylon by the races then inhabiting Southern India, and Malabar tradition tells that some of these Dravidians migrated from I ram or Ceylon northwards to Travancore and other parts of the West Coast of India, bringing with them the cocoanut or southern tree (*tenginamara*), and being known as Tivars (islanders) or Iravars, which names have since been altered to Tiyars



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and Ilavars. This derivation would also explain the name Divaru or Halepaik Divaru borne by the same class of people in the northern part of the district, and in North Canara.

**COMMENT:** The above contention that Thiyyas are Ezhavas is highly suspect. It might be the writings of someone with some vested interest in establishing this erroneous information. As mentioned earlier, the Thiyyas are themselves two separate and disconnected castes. As to Ezhavas, they do not have any connection with *Marumakkathaya* Thiyyas.

It is simply political exigency to try to connect unconnected populations.

103. Baidya is said to be a form of Vaidya, meaning a physician. Some Billavas officiate as priests (pujaris) at bhutasthanas (devil shrines) and garidis.



**COMMENT:** It is simply illustrative that they had a spiritual system which was quite at variance from that of Hinduism.

104. Brimmeru has been transformed, by Brahman ingenuity, into Brahma, and all the bhuthas are converted into Gonas, or attendants on Siva.

**COMMENT:** Someone recently told me that in the **Muthappan** worship of the North Malabar Thiyyas, everything has been changed in meaning to accommodate Brahmanical gods. That the Thiyyas now have more reverence for Hindu gods, rather than for their own traditional deities.

105. "They consider themselves as a superior class, and, if a member of another section enters their mosque, they clean the spot occupied by him during his prayers.

**COMMENT:** No comment.



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106. “Many of the Sudra Bondilis, however, improperly take the title Singh, and say they are Kshatriyas, that is, Rajputs.

**COMMENT:** Another instance of aspiration to attain social stature by caste jumping. Instead of that, there seems to be very rare history of any caste simply declaring that they are superior enough without any claim to any Brahmanical links.

107. All are very particular with respect to eating with another professed Bondili, and refuse to do so unless they are quite certain that he is of their class.

**COMMENT:** This is a real terror which the feudal languages impose on a person or a group of persons. That they are seen as equals to socially lower ranked persons. Word codes would swing down.





108. There is, at Venkatagiri, a street called **Toli mitta**, or Toli quarters, and, in former days, the inhabitants thereof were not allowed to enter the temples.

**COMMENT:** Non-Hindus caste.

109. The industry is a monopoly of the **Hill Khonds**, who, however, turn it to little advantage. They are ignorant of the great commercial value of the dye, and part with the powder to the low-country dealers settled among them for a few measures of rice or a yard or two of cloth.

**COMMENT:** There is nothing new in this. After the takeover of the location by India, most of the tribal areas have been encroached by very powerful commercial groups. They act in close collaboration with the officialdom, who connives at their exploitative tactics.



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110. They also worship various **Takuranis** (village deities), such as **Kotaru** and **Chondi**.

**COMMENT:** Non-Hindu gods.

111. He adds that "it cannot be doubted that one great conservative element of Hinduism is the many sidedness of Vaishnavism. For Vaishnavism is, like Buddhism, the most tolerant of systems.

**COMMENT:** No comment.

112. The **Garbhadhana**, or impregnation ceremony, should, according to the Grihya Sutras, be performed on the fourth day of the marriage ceremonies. But, as the bride is a young girl, it is omitted, or Vedic texts are repeated. The Garbhadhana ceremony is performed, after the girl has attained puberty.

**COMMENT:** No comment.



113. According to the Grihya Sutras, a cow should be presented to the bridegroom, to be cooked or preserved.

**COMMENT:** No comment.

114. Some years ago, at a village near Chalakkudi in the Cochin State, a Nambutiri refused to accept a girl as his bride, because the purohit inadvertently grasped her fingers, to show how it ought to be done at the time of the marriage ceremony. The purohit had to marry the girl himself.

**COMMENT:** No comment.

115. In May, 1883, a salagrama was the ostensible cause of great popular excitement among the Hindus of Calcutta. During the proceedings in a family suit before the High Court, a question arose regarding the identity of a salagrama, regarded as a household god. Counsel on both sides suggested that the thing



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should be brought into court. Mr. Justice Morris hesitated to give this order till he had taken advice. The attorneys on both sides, Hindus, said there could be no objection; the Court interpreter, a high-caste Brahman, said it could not be brought into Court because of the coir matting, Hobson-Jobson, but it might with perfect propriety be brought into the corridor for inspection ; which was done. This took place during the excitement about the ' Ilbert Bill,' giving natives magisterial authority in the provinces over Europeans ; and there followed most violent and offensive articles in several native newspapers reviling Mr. Justice Morris, who was believed to be hostile to the Bill. The Editor of the Bengallee newspaper, an educated man, and formerly a member of the Covenanted Civil Service, the author of one of the most unscrupulous and violent articles, was summoned for contempt of court. He made an apology and complete retractation, but was sentenced to two months' imprisonment."





**COMMENT:** No comment.

116. At the time of worship, some Brahmans, called **Adhyapakas**, recite the Vedas.

**COMMENT:** No comment.

117. The Brahmans do not entirely ignore the worship of the lower deities, such as Mariamma, Muneswara, Kodamanitaya. etc.

**COMMENT:** This is possibly due to the feeling that these deities of other castes (possibly Shamanistic) are also powerful and capable of doing things in the supernatural arena.

118. At Udipi in South Canara, the centre of the Madhva cult, where Madhva preached his Dvaitic philosophy, and where there are several mutts presided over by celibate priests, the



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Brahmans often make a vow to the Bhuthas (devils) of the Paravas and Nalkes.

**COMMENT:** Brahmins, possibly praying to probably Shamanistic deities.

119. It is said that Brahacharnam women can be distinguished by the mode of tying the cloth, which is not worn so as to reach to the feet, but reaches only to just below the knees.

**COMMENT:** Dressing was a sort of uniform by which a person's level in the feudal language codes could be easily identified.

120. Males marry very early in life, and it is very difficult to secure a girl for marriage above the age of five

**COMMENT:** No comment

121. "An interesting feature about the Chidambaram temple is its system of management. It has no landed or other



endowments, nor any **tasdik** allowance, and is the property of a class of Brahmans peculiar to the town, who are held in far more respect than the generality of the temple-priest Brahmans, are called **Dikshitar**s (those who make oblations), marry only among themselves, and in appearance somewhat resemble the Nayars or Tiyan of Malabar, bringing their topknot round to the front of their foreheads.

**COMMENT:** This is a statement with more than one debatable point. I have done it in the intro.

122. As a class the Dikshitar are haughty, and refuse to acknowledge any of the **Sankarachariars** as their priests, because they are almost equal to the god Siva, who is one of them. If a **Sankarachariar** comes to the temple, he is not allowed to take sacred ashes direct from the cup, as is done at other temples to show respect to the Sanyasi.



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**COMMENT:** This is a real mood of nonchalant superiority, as if they are not bothered with what others think about them.

123. ' We do not want to meet with a Soliya even in a picture.'

**COMMENT:** No comment.

124. Their women adopt the Vyshnava women's style of wearing cloths, and to all appearance they would pass for Vyshnava women. The Vyshnava Brahmins would not allow them to mess in their houses, though they treat rice and cakes prepared by them in temples and offered to god as pure and holy, and partake of them."

**COMMENT:** It might be an attempt to copycat the people who they acknowledge as superior to them. However, despite their attempts at copying, they are not allowed to move forward.





125. The Kausika Sanketis occasionally take wives from the Bettadapura section, but, when the married girl joins her husband, her connection with her parents and relatives ceases altogether even in regard to meals.

**COMMENT:** It would be quite difficult to explain to the various codes in the feudal languages that enforce all this kind of repulsions, or maintaining of corridors.

126. “During the Coorg disturbances about the end of the last (eighteenth) century, many young women of the Sanketis were captured by the Kodagas (Coorgs), and some of the captives were subsequently recovered.

**COMMENT:** Before the setting up of the English rule, social security was not thing in existence of the lower castes. However, the higher castes also suffered from this during



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periods of enemy attacks and raids by marauding groups.

127. The Gurukkals are all followers of the Bodhayana Sutras. They are temple priests, and other Brahmans regard them as inferior, and will not eat with them

**COMMENT:** Another instance of caste based repulsion, which actually has its base in the feudal content in the local languages.

128. A good example of Smarthas becoming Vaishnavas is afforded by the Thummagunta Dravidas, some of whom have become Vaishnavas, but still take girls in marriage from Smartha families, but do not give their daughters in marriage to Smarthas.

**COMMENT:** The complications are connected to the complicated feudal word-codes.



129. Both Pattars and Embrandiris, but especially the latter, have adopted the custom of contracting sambandham (alliance) with Nayar women, but sambandham with the foreign Brahmans is not considered to be so respectable as with Nambudiris, and, except in the Palghat taluk (where the Nambudiri is rare), they are not allowed to consort with the women of aristocratic families."

**COMMENT:** It is like the current-day craving for government-employee bridegrooms. If not someone with some formal respect, then it is difficult to accept him as a husband!

130. "The Aryapattar has, in his turn, trespassed into the ranks of the Nayars, and has begun to undertake the religious rite of marriage, i.e., tali-tying, in aristocratic families among them.

**COMMENT:** An cunning entry.



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131. In some places, e.g., the Nandigama taluk of the Kistna district, the Niyogis are not referred to by the name Brahman, Vaidikis being so called.

**COMMENT:** It may be understood that in feudal languages, a single word connecting to a honoured stature in society can change a huge series of verbal codes.

132. **Velnadu**, **Murikinadu**, and **Veginadu** seem to be territorial names, and they occur also among some of the non- Brahman castes.

**COMMENT:** No comment.

133. “Sankaracharya refused to give absolution, and cursed them as unfit to associate with the six sects of Brahmans. The caste is making a strong effort to be readmitted among Brahmans, and some have recently become disciples of Parakalaswami.

**COMMENT:** It is some kind of ‘racism’. It is





akin to the whites having separate beaches in South Africa, and the blacks wanting to barge in. There are innumerable beach locations in South Africa where the blacks can go and swim in peace. However, the terror of the racism is that they do not want to go to any other beach other than where they are unwelcome. In the same manner, this ousting has no value so long as the ousted caste simply doesn't care, and unilaterally mention themselves as superior. That acumen, they do not have. They simply want to barge into the Brahmin fold to get a share of the presumed Brahmanincal superiority.

134. “There is, however, no doubt that, in their habits, customs, religion and ceremonials, these people are wholly Brahmanical, but still they remain entirely detached from the main body of the Brahmans.

**COMMENT:** Yet, they desperately appealed to be recorded as Brahmins. In the case of Thiyyas, they appealed to be not categorised



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as Ezhavas. Isn't there some revelation in the comparison?

135. And the Local Government directed, a little after the census of 1881, that they should be entered as Brahmans in the Government accounts."

**COMMENT:** No comment.

136. Mayur Varma and the Brahmins whom he had brought from Ahi-Kshetra were again driven out by Nanda, a Holeya chief, whose son Chandra Sayana had, however, learned respect for Brahmins from his mother, who had been a dancing-girl in a temple. His admiration for them became so great that he not only brought back the Brahmins, but actually made over all his authority to them, and reduced his people to the position of slaves

**COMMENT:** It is a highly illuminating bit of history. But then, he reduced his own people to



the levels of slaves. Had he brought in the English people instead of the Brahmins, his own people would have improved under English administration. For English language has no enslaving codes in it. Even the erstwhile black slaves of the southern states of the USA improved fabulously under English systems. Elsewhere they still have the looks of *emerging-from-barbarism*.

137. and, though they now talk Canarese in common with the people of other parts to the north of the Sitanadi river, their religious works are still written in the old Tulu-Malayalam character

**COMMENT:** old Tulu-Malayalam character? What is that? Malayalam and Tulu locations were totally unconnected. Was this script actually a **Tulu-Malabari script**? Malabari and Tulu language locations were more or less adjacent.



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138. Some families of Shivalli and Havika Brahmins in the southern or Malayalam portion of the district talk Malayalam, and follow many of the customs of the Malabar or Nambutiri Brahmins

**COMMENT:** It is quite curious that Thurston has not been informed about the existence of Malabari language (<https://archive.org/details/MalabarWordsOPT>). Could there be some kind of conspiracy in this regard? Actually, Malayalam spread into Malabar areas with the spread of the converted Christians into the Malabar region from the Travancore kingdom and later Travancore-Cochin state.

139. but they soon adopted the tenets of the great Malayalam Vedantic teacher Sankaracharya, who is ordinarily believed to have been born at Cranganore in Malabar in





the last quarter of the eighth century, that is, soon after the arrival of the Brahmins on the west coast.

**COMMENT:** His birth place is mentioned as **Kaladi**. This place is not in Malabar, but in South-central Travancore. It is quite possible that at the time of his birth, there was no Malayalam in the location. For, it has been variously mentioned that Malayalam is new language that sprang up some four hundred years back. Moreover, in **Travancore State Manual**, there is ample mention that the local language was mostly Tamil.

However, I do not know much about these things, directly. There was indeed an ancient language in Malabar, which can be called **Malabari**, which has now more or less vanished. However, one can get to hear them in the **Theyyam rituals of Malabar**. It is possible that this ancient language was the platform on which modern Malayalam was built up in Travancore, superimposing it with Tamil and



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Sanskrit. However, the original Malabari seems to have remained un-altered till around the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As of now, it is slowly vanishing, with the modern generation of Malabar finding it too funny to hear and speak. They all claim **Malayalam as their native-language**, which is quite an absurd claim.

140. He denied that the spirits worshipped by the early Dravidians were manifestations of Siva's consort, but he accorded sanction to their worship as supernatural beings of a lower order.

**COMMENT:** May be this might be a sort of commencement of slow integration of non-Hindu (Shamanistic) deities into the Hindu/Brahmanical religion as some kind of lower-caste gods. As for the non-Hindu castes, they were not able to display a stance of independence, being overwhelmed by the hammering tone of the local feudal language word-codes, they had to bear.



141. They have been backward in availing themselves of English education, and consequently not many of them are to be found holding important posts under Government or in the professions, but a few have come to the front in late years.

**COMMENT:** There is a slight similarity with the experience of the Nairs and Thiyyas in Tellicherry areas of North Malabar. The relatively higher placed Nairs found it quite difficult to allow their children to study in the newly founded English schools, where their lower caste Thiyya children were given the freedom to study. However, this later became a great folly in that the Thiyya children who received extremely good quality English education got into the higher echelons of the English administrative system, while many Nairs became totally unqualified for higher position government jobs.



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142. The women, as is usually the case among all classes, are fairer than the men.

**COMMENT:** It is a curious fact. In fact, to think of it, there is no such 'extra' fairness in the females of England or Europe. But then, there are really two quite plausible reasons for this. One is the fact, that men do have to go more into the sun. The second item is a bit connected to the language codes, and cannot be mentioned here.

143. Their religious books are in Sanskrit, and, even north of the Sitanadi river, they are written in the old Tulu-Malayalam character.

**COMMENT:** It must have taken many most curious bits of historical incidences to bring out this bit of contradiction. Religious books in **Sanskrit written in Tulu-Malayalam script!**

144. The Havika Brahmins, perhaps owing to their residing for many generations in the





comparatively cool shade of the areca nut gardens, are specially fair even for west coast Brahmins.

**COMMENT:** Skin complex fairness has some connection to language codes also. Can't elaborate it here.

145. Some Havik Brahmins in the Malayalam portion of the Kasaragod taluk have, like the Shivallis in the same locality, adopted the language and customs of the Malayali Brahmins.

**COMMENT:** Malayali Brahmins or Malabari Brahmins?

146. :—"The sentimental objection to manual labour, which is so predominant in the East Coast Brahmin, and the odium attached to it in this country, which has crystallised into the religious belief that, if a Brahmin cultivates with his own hand, the fire of his hand would burn



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down all that he touches, have entirely disappeared in South Canara.

**COMMENT:** It is not so easy an understanding. There is a huge bit of code work in the feudal languages, which creates a repulsion for manual work under another feudal language speaker. However this does not preclude one from working for oneself, away from the prying eyes of presumed lower classes of the feudal language coding.

Native-English nation are being quite idiotic to allow feudal language speakers to set up commercial organisations inside their nations. Native-English people who work under feudal language speakers will get their souls and individuality scarred. For more on this, read the series of posts on:

<http://saenglish.deverkovil.com/>

147. Oriya Brahman women are kept **gosha** (in seclusion). Occasionally they go out to bring



water, and, if on their way they come across any males, they go to the side of the road, and turn their backs to the passers-by.

**COMMENT:** What makes them go into seclusion has its basis in the feudal language codes.

148. Oriya Brahmans "eat many kinds of meat, as pea fowl, sambur (deer), barking deer, pigeons, wild pig, and fish."

**COMMENT:** No comment

149. Water touched by Dravida Brahmans is considered by them to be polluted

**COMMENT:** Even though this might seem a very irascible statement, there is really a lot of information to be added to this, from the realm of feudal language codes. The issue is the encoding of negative or positive codes on being touched or being seen or being mentioned, in feudal language ambience. Read my book:



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**Software codes of mantra, tantra, witchcraft, black magic, evil eye, evil tongue &c**

150. Marriage with a maternal uncle's daughter, which is common among the Dravida Brahmans, would be considered an act of sacrilege by Oriyas.

When an Oriya Brahman is charged with being a meat eater, he retorts that it is not nearly so bad as marrying a mathulakanya (maternal uncle's daughter).

**COMMENT:** What is reflected is the ambience of defending oneself by being offensive. This is a basic character of feudal language social ambience.

151. “The Saruas cultivate the ‘yam ’ (Colocasia), and the Holuas go a step further, and engage in ordinary cultivation—actual participation in which is forbidden to Brahmans by Manu, as it involves taking the lives of worms and insects.





**COMMENT:** The actual reason for the prohibition may not be in the worms or in the insects. But in the feudal language codes. The illuminative illustration would be in IPS officers working along with police constables, wearing the same uniform, and the constables not being informed that these people are their superiors. Just one word for YOU, HE, HIM, HIS etc. would demean the IPS officers beyond redemption. These are thing about which the native-English have no information about.

152. A few of the Saruas are qualified to act as purohits, but the Holuas hardly ever are, and they were shown in the 1891 census to be the most illiterate of all the Brahmans of the Presidency.

**COMMENT:** It might just be a matter of perspective.



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153. Bhodri means a barber, and the ancestor of the subdivision is said to have been the son of a barber who was brought up at Puri with some Santo boys, and so learned much of the Vedas and Shastras. He left Puri and went into Jeypore, wearing the thread and passing himself off as a Brahman, and eventually married a Brahman girl, by whom he got children who also married Brahmans. At last, however, he was found out, and taken back to Puri, where he committed suicide.

**COMMENT:** Once a person outgrows his traditional mental standards, it is difficult to fit into the subordinate levels of his own class. In modern times, this has happened in the case of lower class individuals who become well-versed in English. In the case of Indians who have gone to live for even a brief period in English nations, cannot even contemplate of coming back. Committing suicide is understood as better than such an eventuality. This is one of the reasons that people who arrive in nations



like Great Britain, USA etc. will fight tooth and nail to hold on to their domicile in native-English nations. However, over there, they exist as the beachhead of a system that despoils the native-English citizens by means of the same feudal language codes of which they themselves are afraid of. However, in English nations, they are safe from its barbs, while the native-English citizens get to feel its thorns and get mentally distressed.

154. The last of the divisions, the Sodeibalyas, are menial servants to the zamindars, and work for daily hire."

**COMMENT:** It would indeed be a tragic level if they have to work alongside castes who are deemed lower castes, as their equals.

155. As they do not abstain from fish, the other Brahmans among whom they have settled regard them as low.



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**COMMENT:** It would not matter to them if they do not care for the opinion of others. However, it is not easy, as they remain part of a social structure, in which so many freedoms are connected to their levels of 'respect'. It is a situation not contemplate-able in pristine-English.

156. Other Brahmans do not go to the Konkani temples, though non-Brahmans do so.

**COMMENT:** No comments

157. The Darsana attached to the Mulki temple comes there daily about 11 A.M. After worship, he is given thirtham (holy water), which he drinks. Taking in his hands the prasadam (offering made to the god), he comes out, and commences to shiver all over his body for about ten minutes. The shivering then abates, and a cane and long strip of deer skin are placed in his hands, with which he lashes





himself on the back, sides, and head. Holy water is given to him, and the shivering ceases. Those who have come to the temple put questions to the Darsana, which are answered in Konkani, and translated. He understands his business thoroughly, and usually recommends the people to make presents of money or jewels to Venkataramana, according to their means.

**COMMENT:** This type of events is more or less connected to **Shamanistic traditions**. There is a hint in the above writing that the whole action is a bit of cunning acting. However, from my own personal experience, I can mention that there are events that do connect to spheres of reality beyond anything mentioned in current day science books. Read my book: **Software codes of mantra, tantra, witchcraft, black magic, evil eye, evil tongue &c.**

158. In 1907, a rich Guzerati merchant, who was doing business at Mangalore, visited the



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temple, and consulted the Darsana concerning the condition of his wife, who was pregnant. The Darsana assured him that she would be safely delivered of a male child, and made him promise to present to the temple silver equal in weight to that of his wife, should the prophecy be realised. The prediction proving true, the merchant gave silver, sugar -candy, and date fruits, to the required weight at a cost, it is said, of five thousand rupees.

**COMMENT:** These things do happen. There can be fraudsters also. It is not clear as to which kind of person was involved in the above incident. Usually nothing of the sort of huge financial benefits are expected or asked for, in return.

159. Receiving a cold reception at the hands of the Zamorin, they proceeded further south, and placed themselves under the protection of the Rulers of Cochin and



Travancore, where they flourish at the present day.

**COMMENT:** A bit of history that might need noting down, and pondering upon. As to why the Zamorin gave them a cold shoulder, while what was offered in Cochin and Travancore were warm ones. It might have some link to other vested interests in Calicut become insecure due to the entry of an entirely new social entity. Nothing social about, but maybe it is a tension connected business monopoly.

160. They are never regarded as on a par with the other Brahmans of Southern India. There is no intermarriage or interdining between them and other Brahmans.

**COMMENT:** So many complications, insecurities, mutual jealousies, backstabbing, mutual repulsion &c. in the various locations in the subcontinent. It was this huge mess that was connected together by the people of



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England to create a grand Empire. All went to waste with the coming to power of an idiot called Clement Atlee. Hopefully he is still screaming out in Hell.

161. They are not allowed access to the inner structure surrounding the chief shrine of the Malayali Hindu temples ; nor do they in turn allow the Hindus of this coast to enter corresponding portions of their religious edifices.

**COMMENT:** This *tit-for-tat* is great. In fact, it does contain the greatest information on the so-called concept of 'racism'. If the native-English do not allow many other populations inside their various private locations, all that the other sides have to do is to create their own private locations where the native-English are not allowed. However, in all possibility there would be no yearning from the native-English to enter into their exclusive locations.





In fact, the others themselves would not frequent their own private locations. All that they would crave for would be to barge into the private locations of the native-English. This is the actual core fact of the so-called English racism. The others include the Continental Europeans, the Celtic language speakers of Great Britain, the blacks, the Asians, the South Americans etc.

162. The Budubudike or Budubudukala are described in the Mysore Census Report as being "gipsy beggars and fortune-tellers from the Marata country, who pretend to consult birds and reptiles to predict future events.

**COMMENT:** The word 'pretend' has a bad taste. These kind of people have gone out of business in recent days. That is not because of them being caught at 'pretending', but because this 'pretention' has been taken over by the web-based astrology sites.



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163. This is done in the mornings, when the charlatan soothsayer pretends to have divined the future fate of the householder by means of the chirping of birds, etc., in the early dawn. They are generally worshippers of **Hanumantha.**"

**COMMENT:** Again the word 'charlatan' is too unilateral. For, persons who makes such definitions actually do not know much more about the Codes of reality, than others do. It is being judgemental without information.

164. He is regarded as able to predict the future of human beings by the flight and notes of birds.

**COMMENT:** Check my book: **Software codes of mantra, tantra, witchcraft, black magic, evil eye, evil tongue &c.**



165. Burmese.—A few Burmese are trained as medical students at Madras for subsequent employment in the Burmese Medical service.

**COMMENT:** If the British-Indian nation had retained Burma inside its boundary, when Clement Atlee gave up the British-Indian army to Jinnah and Nehru way back in 1947, both armies would have made a dash to capture the location. For the location have enough Muslims and non-Muslims. The non-Muslims would have been converted into Hindus, and all their gods connected to Hindu gods as their subordinates.

The place could have been another Kashmir, with two different Maps clamouring for international acceptance.

166. Since Burma became part of the British dominions in 1886, there has been emigration to that developing country from the Madras Presidency on a large scale.

**COMMENT:** No comment.



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## CASTES AND TRIBES OF SOUTHERN INDIA

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Preface

Introduction

Castes and Tribes of Southern India





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## PREFACE

In 1894, equipped with a set of anthropometric Instruments obtained on loan from the Asiatic Society of Bengal, I commenced an investigation of the tribes of the Nilgiri hills, the Todas, Kotas, and Badagas, bringing down on myself the unofficial criticism that "anthropological research at high altitudes is eminently indicated when the thermometer registers 1000 in Madras." From this modest beginning have resulted :-( 1) investigation of various classes which inhabit the city of Madras; ( 2) periodical tours to various parts of the Madras Presidency, with a view to the study of the more important tribes and classes; (3) the publication of Bulletins, wherein the results of my work are embodied; (4) the establishment of an anthropological laboratory ; (5) a collection of photographs of Native types ; (6) a series of lantern slides for lecture purposes ; (7) a collection of phonograph records of tribal songs and music.





The scheme for a systematic and detailed ethnographic survey of the whole of India received the formal sanction of the Government of India in 1901. A Superintendent of Ethnography was appointed for each Presidency or Province, to carry out the work of the survey in addition to his other duties. The other duty, in my particular case-the direction of a large local museum-happily made an excellent blend with the survey operations, as the work of collection for the ethnological section went on simultaneously with that of investigation. The survey was financed for a period of five (afterwards extended to eight) years, and an annual allotment of Rs. 5000 provided for each Presidency and Province. This included Rs. 2,000 for approved notes on monographs, and replies to the stereotyped series of questions. The replies to these questions were not, I am bound to admit, always entirely satisfactory, as they broke down both in accuracy and detail. I may, as an



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illustration, cite the following description of making fire by friction. "They know how to make fire, i.e., by friction of wood as well as stone, etc. They take a triangular cut of stone, and one flat oblong size flat. They hit one another with the maintenance of cocoanut fibre or copper, then fire sets immediately, and also by rubbing the two barks frequently with each other they make fire."

I gladly place on record my hearty appreciation of the services rendered by Mr. K. Rangachari in the preparation of the present volumes. During my temporary absence in Europe, he was placed in charge of the survey, and he has been throughout invaluable in obtaining information concerning manners and customs, as interpreter and photographer, and in taking phonograph records.

For information relating to the tribes and castes of Cochin and Travancore, I gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to Messrs. L. K. Anantha Krishna Aiyer and N. Subramani Aiyer,



the Superintendents of Ethnography for their respective States. The notes relating to the Cochin State have been independently published at the Ernakulam Press, Cochin.

In the scheme for the Ethnographic Survey, it was laid down that the Superintendents should supplement the information obtained from representative men and by their own enquiries by "researches into the considerable mass of information which lies buried in official reports, in the journals of learned Societies, and in various books." Of this injunction full advantage has been taken, as will be evident from the abundant crop of references in foot-notes.

It is impossible to express my thanks individually to the very large number of correspondents, European and Indian, who have generously assisted me in my work. I may, however, refer to the immense aid which I have received from the District Manuals edited by Mr. (now Sir) H. A. Stuart, I.C.S., and the District Gazetteers, which have been quite recently



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issued under the editorship of Mr. W. Francis, I.C.S., Mr. F. R. Hemingway, I.C.S., and Mr. F. B. Evans, I.C.S.

My thanks are further due to Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao, to whom I am indebted for much information acquired when he was engaged in the preparation of the District Gazetteers, and for revising the proof sheets.

For some of the photographs of Badagas, Kurumbas, and Todas, I am indebted to Mr. A T W. Penn of Ootacamund.

I may add that the anthropometric data are all the result of measurements taken by myself, in order to eliminate the varying error resulting from the employment of a plurality of observers.

E.T.





INTRODUCTION

THE vast tract of country, over which my investigations in connection with the ethnographic survey of South India have extended, is commonly known as the Madras Presidency, and officially as the Presidency of Fort St. George and its Dependencies. Included therein were the small feudatory States of Puduk6ttai, Banganapalle, and Sandur, and the larger Native States of Travancore and Cochin. The area of the British territory and Feudatory States, as returned at the census, 1901, was 143,221 square miles, and the population 38,623,066. The area and population of the Native States of Travancore and Cochin, as recorded at the same census, were as follows :-

	Area	Population
	SQ.MILES	
	.	
Travancore	7091	2,952,157
Cochin	1361	512,025



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Briefly, the task which was set me in 1901 was to record the 'manners and customs' and physical characters of more than 300 castes and tribes, representing more than 40,000,000 individuals, and spread over an area exceeding 150,000 square miles.

The Native State of Mysore, which is surrounded by the Madras Presidency on all sides, except on part of the west, where the Bombay Presidency forms the boundary, was excluded from my beat ethnographically, but included for the purpose of anthropometry. As, however, nearly all the castes and tribes which inhabit the Mysore State are common to it and the Madras Presidency, I have given here and there some information relating thereto.

It was clearly impossible for myself and my assistant, in our travels, to do more than carry out personal investigations over a small portion of the vast area indicated above, which provides ample scope for research by many trained explorers. And I would that more men, like my



friends Dr. Rivers and Mr. Lapicque, who have recently studied the Man in Southern India from an anthropological and physiological point of view, would come out on a visit, and study some of the more important castes and tribes in detail. I can promise them every facility for carrying out their work under the most favourable conditions for research, if not of climate. And we can provide them with anything from 112° in the shade to the sweet half English air of the Nilgiri and other hill-ranges.

Routine work at headquarters unhappily keeps me a close prisoner in the office chair for nine months in the year. But I have endeavoured to snatch three months on circuit in camp, during which the dual functions of the survey-the collection of ethnographic and anthropometric data-were carried out in the peaceful isolation of the jungle, in villages, and in mofussil (up-country) towns. These wandering expeditions have afforded ample evidence that delay in carrying through the





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scheme for the survey would have been fatal. For, as in the Pacific and other regions, so in India, civilisation is bringing about a radical change in indigenous manners and customs, and mode of life. It has, in this connection, been well said that " there will be plenty of money and people available for anthropological research, when there are no more aborigines. And it behoves our museums to waste no time in completing their anthropological collections".

Tribes which, only a few years ago, were living in a wild state, clad in a cool and simple garb of forest leaves, buried away in the depths of the jungle, and living, like pigs and bears, on roots, honey, and other forest produce, have now come under the domesticating, and sometimes detrimental influence of contact with Europeans, with a resulting modification of their conditions of life, morality, and even language. The **Paniyans** of the Wynaad, and the **Irulas** of the Nilgiris, now work regularly for wages on planters' estates, and I have seen a Toda boy





studying for the third standard instead of tending the buffaloes of his mand. A Toda lassie curling her ringlets with the assistance of a cheap Gern1an looking-glass ; a Toda man smeared with Hindu sect marks, and praying for male offspring at a Hindu shrine ; the abandonment of leafy garn1cnts in favour of imported cotton piece-goods ; the employment of kerosene tins in lieu of thatch ; the decline of the national turban in favour of the less becoming pork-pie cap or knitted nightcap of gaudy hue; the abandonment of indigenous vegetable dyes in favour of tinned anilin and alizarin dyes ; the replacement of the indigenous peasant jewellery by imported beads and imitation jewellery made in Europe-these are a few examples of change resulting from Western and other influences.

The practice of human sacrifice, or **Meriah** rite, has been abolished within the memory of men still living, and replaced by the equally efficacious slaughter of a buffalo or sheep. And



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I have notes on a substituted ceremony, in which a sacrificial sheep is shaved so as to produce a crude representation of a human being, a Hindu sect mark painted on its forehead, a turban stuck on its head, and a cloth around its body. The picturesque, but barbaric ceremony of hook-swinging is now regarded with disfavour by Government, and, some time ago, I witnessed a tame substitute for the original ceremony, in which, instead of a human being with strong iron hooks driven through the small of his back, a little wooden figure, dressed up in turban and body cloth, and carrying a shield and sabre, was hoisted on high and swung round.

In carrying out the anthropometric portion of the survey, it was unfortunately impossible to disguise the fact that I am a Government official, and very considerable difficulties were encountered owing to the wickedness of the people, and their timidity and fear of increased taxation, plague inoculation, and transportation.



The Paniyan women of the Wynaad believed that I was going to have the finest specimens among them stuffed for the Madras Museum. An Irula man, on the Nilgiri hills, who was wanted by the police for some mild crime of ancient date, came to be measured, but absolutely refused to submit to the operation on the plea that the height-measuring standard was the gallows. The similarity of the ward Boyan to Boer was once fatal to my work. For, at the time of my visit to the Oddes, who have Boyan as their title, the South African war was just over, and they were afraid that I was going to get them transported, to replace the Boers who had been exterminated.

Being afraid, too, of my evil eye, they refused to fire a new kiln of bricks for the club chambers at Coimbatore until I had taken my departure. During a long tour through the Mysore province, the Natives mistook me for a recruiting sergeant bent on seizing them for employment in South Africa, and fled before my approach from town





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to town. The little spot, which I am in the habit of making with Aspinall's white paint to indicate the position of the fronto-nasal suture and bi-orbital breadth, was supposed to possess vesicant properties, and to blister into numb.cr on the forehead, which would serve as a means of future identification for the purpose of kidnapping.

The record of head, chest, and foot measurements, was viewed with marked suspicion, on the ground that I was an army tailor, measuring for sepoy's clothing. The untimely death of a Native outside a town, at which I was halting, was attributed to my evil eye. Villages were denuded of all save senile men, women, and infants. The vendors of food-stuffs in one bazar, finding business slack owing to the flight of their customers, raised their prices, and a missionary complained that the price of butter had gone up.

My arrival at one important town was coincident with a great annual temple festival,





whereat there were not sufficient coolies left to drag the temple car in procession. So I had perforce to move on, and leave the Brahman heads unmeasured. The head official of another town, when he came to take leave of me, apologised for the scrubby appearance of his chin, as the local barber had fled. One man, who had volunteered to be tested with Lovibond's tintometer, was suddenly seized with fear in the midst of the experiment, and, throwing his body-cloth at my feet, ran for all he was worth, and disappeared. An elderly Municipal servant wept bitterly when undergoing the process of measurement, and a woman bade farewell to her husband, as she thought for ever, as he entered the threshold of my impromptu laboratory.

The goniometer for estimating the facial angle is specially hated, as it goes into the mouth of castes both high and low, and has to be taken to a tank (pond) after each application.

The members of a certain caste insisted on



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being measured before 4 P.M., so that they might have time to remove, by ceremonial ablution, the pollution from my touch before sunset.

Such are a few of the unhappy results, which attend the progress of a Government anthropologist. I may, when in camp, so far as measuring operations are concerned draw a perfect and absolute blank for several days in succession, or a gang of fifty or even more representatives of different castes may turn up at the same time, all in a hurry to depart as soon as they have been sufficiently amused by the phonograph, American series of pseudoptics (illusions), and hand dynamometer, which always accompany me on my travels as an attractive bait.

When this occurs, it is manifestly impossible to record all the major, or any of the minor measurements, which are prescribed in 'Anthropological Notes and Queries,' and



elsewhere.

And I have to rest unwillingly content with a bare record of those measurements, which experience has taught me are the most important from a comparative point of view within my area, viz., stature, height and breadth of nose, and length and breadth of head, from which the nasal and cephalic indices can be calculated.

I refer to the practical difficulties, in explanation of a record which is admittedly meagre, but wholly unavoidable, in spite of the possession of a good deal of patience and a liberal supply of cheroots, and current coins, which are often regarded with suspicion as sealing a contract, like the King's shilling.

I have even known a man get rid of the coin presented to him, by offering it, with flowers and a cocoanut, to the village goddess at her shrine, and present her with another coin as a peace-offering, to get rid of the pollution created by my money.





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The manifold views, which have been brought forward as to the origin and place in nature of the indigenous population of Southern India, are scattered so widely in books, manuals, and reports, that it will be convenient if I bring together the evidence derived from sundry sources.

The original name for the Dravidian family, it may be noted, was Tamulic, but the term Dravidian was substituted by Bishop Caldwell, in order that the designation Tamil might be reserved for the language of that name. Dravida is the adjectival form of Dravida, the Sanskrit name for the people occupying the south of the Indian Peninsula (the Deccan of some European writers).\*

According to Haeckel\*, three of the twelve species of man-the Dravidas (Deccans; Sinhalese), Nubians, and Mediterraneans (Caucasians, Basque, Semites, Indo-Germanic tribes)-" agree in several characteristics, which seem to establish a close relationship between





them, and to distinguish them from the remaining species. The chief of these characteristics is the strong development of the beard which, in all other species, is either entirely wanting, or but very scanty. The hair of their heads is in most cases more or less curly.

\* "Deccan, Hind, Dakhin, Dakhan ; dakkina, the Prakr. form of Sakt. dakshina, ' the south.' The southern part of India, the Peninsula, and especially the table-land between the Eastern and Western Ghauts." Yule and Burnell. Hobson-Jobson.

\*\* History of Creation.

Other characteristics also seem to favour our classing them in one main group of curly-haired men (Euplocomi); at present the primeval species, Homo Dravida, is only represented by the Deccan tribes in the southern part of Hindustan, and by the neighbouring inhabitants of the mountains on the north-east of Ceylon. But, in earlier times, this race seems to have occupied the whole of Hindustan, and to have spread even further. It shows, on the one hand,



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traits of relationship to the Australians and Malays; on the other to the Mongols and **Mediterranese**. Their skin is either of a light or dark brown colour; in some tribes, of a yellowish brown. The hair of their heads is, as in Mediterranean, more or less curled ; never quite smooth, like that of the **Euthycomi**, nor actually woolly, like that of the **Ulotrichi**. The strong development of the beard is also like that of the Mediterranean. Their forehead is generally high, their nose prominent and narrow, their lips slightly protruding. Their language is now very much mixed with Indo-Germanic elements, but seems to have been originally derived from a very primæval language."

In the chapter devoted to 'Migration and Distribution of Organisms,' Haeckel, in referring to the continual changing of the distribution of land and water on the surface of the earth, says : "The Indian Ocean formed a continent, which extended from the Sunda Islands along the southern coast of Asia to the east coast of



Africa. This large continent of former times Sclater has called Lemuria, from the monkey-like animals which inhabited it, and it is at the same time of great importance from being the probable cradle of the human race. The important proof which Wallace has furnished by the help of chronological facts, that the present Malayan Archipelago consists in reality of two completely different divisions, is particularly interesting. The western division, the Indo-Malayan Archipelago, comprising the large islands of Borneo, Java, and Sumatra, was formerly connected by Malacca with the Asiatic continent, and probably also with the Lemurian continent, and probably also with the Lemurian continent just mentioned.

The eastern division, on the other hand, the Austro-Malayan Archipelago, comprising Celebes, the Moluccas, New Guinea, Solomon's Islands, etc., was formerly directly connected with Australia."

An important ethnographic fact, and one





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which is significant, is that the description of tree-climbing by the Dyaks of Borneo, as given by Wallace,\* might have been written on the Anaimalai hills of Southern India, and would apply equally well in every detail to the Kadirs who inhabit those hills\*\*.

An interesting custom, which prevails among the Kadirs and Mala Vedans of Travancore, and among them alone, so far as I know, in the Indian Peninsula, is that of chipping all or some of the incisor teeth into the form of a sharp pointed, but not serrated, cone. The operation is said to be performed, among the Kadirs, with a chisel or bill-hook and file, on boys at the age of eighteen, and girls at the age of ten or thereabouts.

\* Malay Archipelago, 1890.

\*\* See article Kadir.

It is noted by Skeat and Blagden\* that the Jakuns of the Malay Peninsula are accustomed to file their teeth to a point. Mr. Crawford tells us





further that, in the Malay Archipelago, the practice of filing and blackening the teeth is a necessary prelude to marriage, the common way of expressing the fact that a girl has arrived at puberty being that she had her teeth filed.

\* Pagan Races of the Malay Peninsula, 1906.

In an article\* entitled "Die Zauberschriftenschriften der Negrito in Malaka," Dr. K. T. Preuss describes in detail the designs on the bamboo combs, etc., of the Negritos of Malacca, and compares them with the strikingly similar designs on the bamboo combs worn by the Kadirs of Southern India.

\* Globus, 1899.

He works out in detail the theory that the design is not, as I called it\* an ornamental geometric pattern, but consists of a series of hieroglyphics.

\* Madras



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Museum Bull., II,  
3, 1899.

It is noted by Skeat and Blagden \* that “the **Semang** women wore in their hair a remarkable kind of comb, which appears to be worn entirely as a charm against diseases. These combs were almost invariably made of bamboo, and were decorated with an infinity of designs, no two of which ever entirely agreed.

\* Op. cit.

It was said that each disease had its appropriate pattern. Similar combs are worn by the Pangan, the Semang and Sakai of Perak, and most of the mixed (Semang-Sakai) tribes." I am informed by Mr. Vincent that, as far as he knows, the Kadir combs are not looked on as charms, and the markings thereon have no mystic significance. A Kadir man should always make a comb, and present it to his wife just



before marriage or at the conclusion of the marriage ceremony, and the young men vie with each other as to who can make the nicest comb. Sometimes they represent strange articles on the combs. Mr. Vincent has, for example, seen a comb with a very good imitation of the face of a clock scratched on it.

In discussing the racial affinities of the Sakais, Skeat and Blagden write # that "an alternative theory comes to us on the high authority of Virchow, who puts it forward, however, in a somewhat tentative manner. It consists in regarding the Sakai as an outlying branch of a racial group formed by the Vedda (of Ceylon), Tamil, Kurumba, and Australian races ... Of these the height is variable, but, in all four of the races compared, it is certainly greater than that of the Negrito races. The skin colour, again, it is true, varies to a remarkable degree, but the general hair character appears to be uniformly long, black and wavy, and the skull-index, on the other hand, appears to



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indicate consistently a dolichocephalic or long-shaped head."

Speaking of the Sakais, the same authorities state that "in evidence of their striking resemblance to the Veddas, it is perhaps worth remarking that one of the brothers Sarasin who had lived among the Veddas and knew them very well, when shown a photograph of a typical Sakai, at first supposed it to be a photograph of a Vedda." For myself, when I first saw the photographs of Sakais published by Skeat and Blagden, it was difficult to realise that I was not looking at pictures of Kadirs, Paniyans, Kurumbas, or other jungle folk of Southern India.

It may be noted en passant, that emigration takes place at the present day from the southern parts of the Madras Presidency to the Straits Settlements. The following statement shows the number of passengers that proceeded thither during 1906 :





Madras—					Total.
South Arcot,	{ Porto Novo	...	...	...	2,555
	{ Cuddalore	...	...	...	583
	{ Pondicherry	...	...	...	55
Tanjore ..	{ Negapatam	...	...	...	238
	{ and				
	{ Nagore	...	...	...	45,453
	{ Karikal	...	...	...	3,422

"The name Kling (or Keling) is applied, in the Malay countries, to the people of Continental India who trade thither, or are settled in those regions, and to the descendants of settlers. The Malay use of the word is, as a rule, restricted to Tamils. The name is a form of Kalinga, a very ancient name for the region known as the Northern Circars, i.e., the Telugu coast of the Bay of Bengal." \*

\* Yule and Burnell, Hobson-Jobson,

It is recorded by Dr. N. Anandale that the phrase Orang- Klino- Islam [i.e., a Muhammadan from the Madras coast) occurs in Patani Malay. He further informs us \* that among the Labbai Muhammadans of the Madura coast, there are "certain men who make a livelihood by shooting pigeons with blow-guns.



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According to my Labbai informants, the ' guns ' are purchased by them in Singapore from Bugis traders. There is still a considerable trade, although diminished, between Kilakarai and the ports of Burma and the Straits Settlements. It is carried on entirely by Muhammadans in native sailing vessels, and a large proportion of the Musalmans of Kilakarai have visited Penang and Singapore. It is not difficult to find among them men who can speak Straits Malay. The local name for the blow-gun is sengguttan, and is derived in popular etymology from the Tamil *sen* (above) and *kutu* (to stab). I have little doubt that it is really a corruption of the Malay name of the weapon sumpitan."

\* Mem. Asiat. Soc, Bengal, Miscellanea Ethnographica, I, 1906.

On the evidence of the very close affinities between the plants and animals in Africa and India at a very remote period, Mr. R. D. Oldham concludes that there was once a continuous



stretch of dry land connecting South Africa and India. "In some deposits," he writes\*, " found resting upon the Karoo beds on the coast of Natal, 22 out of 35 species of Mollusca and Echinodermata collected and specifically identified, are identical with forms found in the cretaceous beds of Southern India, the majority being Trichinopoly species. From the cretaceous rocks of Madagascar, six species of cretaceous fossils were examined by Mr. R. B. Newton in 1899, of which three are also found in the Ariyalur group (Southern India). The South African beds are clearly coast or shallow water deposits, like those of India. The great similarity of forms certainly suggests continuity of coast line between the two regions, and thus supports the view that the land connection between South Africa and India, already shown to have existed in both the lower and upper Gondwana periods, was continued into cretaceous times."

\* Manual of the Geology of India, and edition, 1S93.





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By Huxley\* the races of mankind are divided into two primary divisions, the Ulotrichi with crisp or woolly hair (Negros ; Negritos), and the Leiotrichi with smooth hair ; and the Dravidians arc included in the Australoid group of the Leiotrichi " with dark skin, hair and eyes, wavy black hair, and eminently long, prognathous skulls, with well-developed brow ridges, who are found in Australia and in the Deccan."

\* Anatomy of Vertebrated Animals, 1871.

There is, in the collection of the Royal College of Surgeons' Museum, an exceedingly interesting "Hindu " skull from Southern India, conspicuously dolichocephalic, and with highly developed superciliary ridges. Some of the recorded measurements of this skull are as follows :

Length	..	..	..	..	19'6	cm.
Breadth	..	..	..	..	13'2	"
Cephalic index	..	..	..	..	67'3	
Nasal height	..	..	..	..	4'8	cm.
„ breadth	..	..	..	..	2'5	"
„ index	..	..	..	..	52'1	





Another "Hindu" skull, in the collection of the Madras Museum, with similar marked development of the superciliary ridges, has the following measurements :

Length	..	..	..	..	18·4	cm.
Breadth	..	..	..	..	13·8	„
Cephalic index	..	..	..	..	75	
Nasal height	..	..	..	..	4·9	cm.
„ breadth	..	..	..	..	2·1	„
„ index	..	..	..	..	42·8	

I am unable to subscribe to the prognathism of the Dravidian tribes of Southern India, or of the jungle people, though aberrant examples thereof are contained in the collection of skulls at the Madras Museum, e.g., the skull of a Tamil man (caste unknown) who died a few years ago in Madras (Pl. \-a).

The average facial angle of various castes and tribes which I have examined ranged between 67° and 70° and the inhabitants of Southern India may be classified as orthognathous. Some of the large earthenware urns excavated by Mr. A. Rea, of the Archaeological Department, at the " prehistoric "



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burial site at Aditanallur in the Tinnevely district,\* contained human bones, and skulls in a more or less perfect condition. Two of these skulls, preserved at the Madras Museum, are conspicuously prognathous (Pl. I-b). Concerning this burial site M. L. Lapidique writes as follows\*\*, " *J'ai rapporte un specimen des urnes funeraires, avec une collection assez complete du mobilier fun^raire. J'ai rapporte aussi un crane en assez bon ^tat, et parfaitement determinable. Il est hyperdolichoc^phale, et s'accorde avec la serie que le service d'arch^ologie de Madras a deja reunie. Je pense que la race d'Adichanallour appartient aux Proto-Dravidiens.*"

• Ste Annual Report, Archaeological Survey of India, 1902-03.

\*\* Bull, Museum d'Histoire Naturelle, 1905.

The measurements of six of the most perfect skulls from Aditanallur in the Madras Museum collection give the following results :



Cephalic length, cm.	Cephalic breadth, cm.	Cephalic index,
18·8	12·4	66·
19·1	12·7	66·5
18·3	12·4	67·8
18·	12·2	67·8
18·	12·8	77·1
16·8	13·1	78·

\* See Annual Report, Archeological Survey of India, 1902-03.

\*\*Bull, Museum d’ Histoire Naturelle, 1905.

The following extracts from my notes show that' the hyperdoLichocephalic type survives in the dolichocephalic inhabitants of the Tamil country at the present day :

Class.	Number examined.			Cephalic index below 70.
Palli .. ..	40	64·4 ; 66·9 ; 67 ; 68·2 ; 68·9 ; 69·6.		
Paraiyan .. ..	40	64·8 ; 69·2 ; 69·3 ; 69·5		
Vellāla .. ..	40	67·9 ; 69·6.		

By Flower and Lydekker,\* a white division of man, called the Caucasian or Eurafrican, is made to include Huxley's Xanthochroi (blonde type) and Melanochroi (black hair and eyes, and skin of almost all shades from white to black). The Melanochroi are said to " comprise the



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greater majority of the inhabitants of Southern Europe, North Africa, and South-west Asia, and consist mainly of the Aryan, Semitic, and Hamitic families. The Dravidians of India, the Veddahs of Ceylon, and probably the Ainus of Japan, and the Maoutzc of China, also belong to this race, which may have contributed something to the mixed character of some tribes of Indo- China and the Polynesian islands, and have given at least the characters of the hair to the otherwise Negroid inhabitants of Australia. In Southern India they are largely mixed with a Negrito element, and, in Africa, where their habitat becomes coterminous with that of the Negroes, numerous cross-races have sprung up between them all along the frontier line."

\* Introduction to the Study of Mammals, living and extinct, 1891.

In describing the "Hindu type," Topinard\* divides the population of the Indian peninsula into three strata, viz., the Black, Mongolian, and





the Aryan.

\* Anthropology. Translation, 1894.

"The remnants of the first," he says, "are at the present time shut up in the mountains of Central India under the name of Bhils, Mahairs, Ghonds, and Khonds ; and in the south under that of Yenadis, Kurumbas, etc. Its primitive characters, apart from its black colour and low stature, are difficult to discover, but it is to be noticed that travellers do not speak of woolly hair in India.\* The second has spread over the plateaux of Central India by two lines of way, one to the north-east, the other to the north-west. The remnants of the first invasion are seen in the Dravidian or Tamil tribes, and those of the second in the Jhats. The third more recent, and more important as to quality than as to number, was the Aryan."

\* I have only seen one individual with woolly hair in Southern India, and he was of mixed Tamil and African parentage.



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In speaking further of the Australian type, characterised by a combination of smooth hair with Negroid features, Topinard states that "it is clear that the Australians might very well be the result of the cross between one race with smooth hair from some other place, and a really Negro and autochthonous race. The opinions held by Huxley are in harmony with this hypothesis. He says the Australians are identical with the ancient inhabitants of the Deccan. The features of the present blacks in India, and the characters which the Dravidian and Australian languages have in common, tend to assimilate them. The existence of the boomerang in the two countries, and some remnants of caste in Australia, help to support the opinion."

Of the so-called boomerangs of Southern India, the Madras Museum possesses three (two ivory, one wooden) from the Tanjore armoury (Pl. II). Concerning them, the Dewan of



**CLICK HERE**



Pudukkottai writes to me as follows. "The valari or valai tadi (bent stick) is a short weapon, generally made of some hard-grained wood.



SOUTH INDIAN (TODINIANGS)

It is also sometimes made of iron. It is crescent-shaped, one end being heavier than the other, and the outer end is sharpened. Men trained in the use of the weapon hold it by the lighter end, whirl it a few times over their shoulders to give it impetus, and then hurl it with great force against the object aimed at. It is said that there were experts in the art of throwing the valari, who could at one stroke despatch small game, and even man. No such experts are now forthcoming in the Pudukkottai State, though the instrument is reported to be occasionally used





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in hunting hares, jungle fowl, etc. Its days, however, must be counted as past. Tradition states that the instrument played a considerable part in the Poligar wars of the last century. But it now reposes peacefully in the households of the descendants of the rude Kalian and Maravan warriors, preserved as a sacred relic of a chivalric past, along with other old family weapons in their puja (worship) room, brought out and scraped and cleaned on occasions like the Ayudha puja day (when worship is paid to weapons and implements of industry), and restored to its place of rest immediately afterwards."

At a Kalian marriage, the bride and bridegroom go to the house of the latter, where boomerangs are exchanged, and a feast is held. This custom appears to be fast becoming a tradition. But there is a common saying still current " Send the valai tadi, and bring the bride." \*

\* See article Maravan.





It is pointed out by Topinard\* as a somewhat important piece of evidence, that, in the West, about Madagascar and the point of Aden in Africa, there are black tribes with smooth hair, or, at all events, large numbers of individuals who have it, mingled particularly among the Somalis and the Gallas, in the region where M. Broca has an idea that some dark, and not Negro, race, now extinct, once existed. At the meeting of the British Association, 1898, Mr. W. Crooke gave expression to the view that the Dravidians represent an emigration from the African continent, and discounted the theory that the Aryans drove the aboriginal inhabitants into the jungles with the suggestion that the Aryan invasion was more social than racial, viz., that what India borrowed from the Aryans was manners and customs. According to this view, it must have been reforming aborigines who gained the ascendancy in India, rather than new-comers ; and those of the aborigines who



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clung to their old ways got left behind in the struggle for existence.

\* Op. cit.

In an article devoted to the Australians, Professor R. Semon writes as follows. "We must, without hesitation, presume that the ancestors of the Australians stood, at the time of their immigration to the continent, on a lower rung of culture than their living representatives of to-day. Whence, and in what manner, the immigration took place, it is difficult to determine. In the neighbouring quarter of the globe there lives no race, which is closely related to the Australians. Their nearest neighbours, the Papuans of New Guinea, the Malays of the Sunda Islands, and the Macris of New Zealand, stand in no close relationship to them. On the other hand, we find further away, among the Dravidian aborigines of India, types which remind us forcibly of the Australians in their anthropological characters.



In drawing attention to the resemblance of the hill-tribes of the Deccan to the Australians, Huxley says : ' An ordinary cooly, such as one can see among the sailors of any newly-arrived East India vessel, would, if stripped, pass very well for an Australian, although the skull and lower jaw are generally less coarse.' Huxley here goes a little too far in his accentuation of the similarity of type. We are, however, undoubtedly confronted with a number of characters—skull formation, features, wavy curled hair—in common between the Australians and Dravidians, which gain in importance from the fact that, by the researches of Norris, Bleek, and Caldwell, a number of points of resemblance between the Australian and Dravidian languages have been discovered, and this despite the fact that the homes of the two races are so far apart, and that a number of races are wedged in between them, whose languages have no relationship whatever to either the Dravidian or Australian.





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There is much that speaks in favour of the view that the Australians and Dravidians sprang from a common main branch of the human race. According to the laborious researches of Paul and Fritz Sarasin, the Veddas of Ceylon, whom one might call pre- Dravidians, would represent an off-shoot from this main stem. When they branched off, they stood on a very low rung of development, and seem to have made hardly any progress worth mentioning."

In dealing with the Australian problem, Mr. A. H. Keane \* refers to the time when Australia formed almost continuous land with the African continent, and to its accessibility on the north and north-west to primitive migration both from India and Papuasia.

\* Ethnology, 1896.

"That such migrations," he writes, " took place, scarcely admits of a doubt, and the Rev. John Mathew\* concludes that the continent was first occupied by a homogeneous branch of the





Papuan race either from New Guinea or Malaysia, and that these first arrivals, to be regarded as true aborigines, passed into Tasmania, which at that time probably formed continuous land with Australia. Thus the now extinct Tasmanians would represent the primitive type, which, in Australia, became modified, but not effaced, by crossing with later immigrants, chiefly from India. These are identified, as they have been by other ethnologists, with the Dravidians, and the writer remarks that ' although the Australians are still in a state of savagery, and the Dravidians of India have been for many ages a people civilized in a great measure, and possessed of literature, the two peoples are affiliated by deeply-marked characteristics in their social system as shown by the boomerang, which, unless locally evolved, must have been introduced from India.'

\* Proc. K. Soc. N. S. Wales, XXIII, part III.



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But the variations in the physical characters of the natives appear to be too great to be accounted for by a single graft ; hence Malays also are introduced from the Eastern Archipelago, which would explain both the straight hair in many districts, and a number of pure Malay words in several of the native languages." Dealing later with the ethnical relations of the Dravidas, Mr. Keane says that " although they preceded the Aryan-speaking Hindus, they are not the true aborigines of the Deccan, for they were themselves preceded by dark peoples, probably of aberrant Negrite type."



*a.* SKULL OF TAMIL MAN.  
*b.* SKULL FROM ADITANALLUR.



In the ' Manual of Administration of the Madras Presidency,' Dr. C. Macleane writes as follows. "The history proper of the south of to the Dravidian ; secondly, as to the period when the Aryans had begun to impose their religion and customs upon the Dravidians, but the time indicated by the early dynasties had not yet been reached. Geology and natural history alike make it certain that, at a time within the bounds of human knowledge, Southern India did not form part of Asia. A large southern continent, of which this country once formed part, has ever been assumed as necessary to account for the different circumstances.

The Sanscrit Pooranic writers, the Ceylon Boodhists, and the local traditions of the west coast, all indicate a great disturbance of the point of the Peninsula and Ceylon within recent times.\*

\* " It is evident that, during much of the tertiary period, Ceylon and South India were bounded on the north by a considerable extent of sea, and probably





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formed part of an extensive southern continent or great island. The very numerous and remarkable cases of affinity with Malaya require, however, some closer approximation to these islands, which probably occurred at a later period." Wallace. Geographical Distribution of Animals, 1876.

Investigations in relation to race show it to be by no means impossible that Southern India was once the passage-ground, by which the ancient progenitors of Northern and Mediterranean races proceeded to the parts of the globe which they now inhabit. In this part of the world, as in others, antiquarian remains show the existence of peoples who used successively implements of unwrought stone, of wrought stone, and of metal fashioned in the most primitive manner\*!

\* See Brecks, Primitive Tribes and Monuments of the Nilgiris ; Phillips, Tumuli of the Salem district ; Rea, Prehistoric Burial Places in Southern India ; R. Bruce Foote, Catalogues of the Prehistoric Antiquities in the Madras Museum, etc.





These tribes have also left cairns and stone circles indicating burial places. It has been usual to set these down as earlier than Dravidian. But the hill Coorumbur of the Palmanair plateau, who are only a detached portion of the oldest known Tamulian India may be held to begin with the Hindu dynasties formed by a more or less intimate admixture of the Aryan and Dravidian systems of government. But, prior to that, three stages of historical knowledge are recognisable ; first, as to such aboriginal period as there may have been prior population, erect dolmens to this day. The sepulchral urns of Tinnevely may be earlier than Dravidian, or they may be Dravidian . . . The evidence of the grammatical structure of language is to be relied on as a clearly distinctive mark of a population, but, from this point of view, it appears that there are more signs of the great lapse of time than of previous populations. The grammar of the South of India is exclusively Dravidian, and bears no trace of



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ever having been anything else. The hill, forest, and Pariah tribes use the Dravidian forms of grammar and inflection . . . The Dravidians, a very primeval race, take a by no means low place in the conjectural history of humanity. They have affinities with the Australian aborigines, which would probably connect their earliest origin with that people." Adopting a novel classification. Dr. Macleane, in assuming that there are no living representatives in Southern India of any race of a wholly pre-Dravidian character, sub-divides the Dravidians into pre-Tamulian and Tamulian, to designate two branches of the same family, one older or less civilised than the other.

The importance, which has been attached by many authorities to the theory of the connection between the Dravidians and Australians, is made very clear from the passages in their writings, which I have quoted. Before leaving this subject, I may appropriately cite as an important witness Sir William Turner, who has



studied the Dravidians and Australians from the standpoint of craniology.\* " Many ethnologists of great eminence," he writes, " have regarded the aborigines of Australia as closely associated with the Dravidians of India.

\* Contributions to the Craniology of the People of the Empire of India, Pari II. The aborigines of Chula Nagpur, and of the Central Provinces, the People of Orissa, Veddahs and Negritos, 1900.

Some also consider the Dravidians to be a branch of the great Caucasian stock, and affiliated therefore to Europeans. If these two hypotheses are to be regarded as sound, a relationship between the aboriginal Australians and the European would be established through the Dravidian people of India. The affinities between the Dravidians and Australians have been based upon the employment of certain words by both people, apparently derived from common roots ; by the use of the boomerang, similar to the well-known Australian weapon, by





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some Dravidian tribes ; by the Indian peninsula having possibly had in a previous geologic epoch a land connection with the Austro-Malayan Archipelago, and by certain correspondences in the physical type of the two people.

Both Dravidians and Australians have dark skins approximating to black ; dark eyes ; black hair, either straight, wavy or curly, but not woolly or frizzly ; thick lips ; low nose with wide nostrils ; usually short stature, though the Australians are somewhat taller than the Dravidians. When the skulls are compared with each other, whilst they correspond in some particulars, they differ in others. In both races, the general form and proportions are dolichocephalic, but in the Australians the crania are absolutely longer than in the Dravidians, owing in part to the prominence of the glabella. The Australian skull is heavier, and the outer table is coarser and rougher than in the Dravidian ; the forehead also is much more receding ; the sagittal region





is frequently ridged, and the slope outwards to the parietal eminence is steeper. The Australians in the normafacialis have the glabella and supra-orbital ridges much more projecting ; the nasion more depressed ; the jaws heavier ; the upper jaw usually prognathous, sometimes remarkably so." Of twelve Dravidian skulls measured by Sir William Turner, in seven the jaw was orthognathous, in four, in the lower term of the mesognathous series; one specimen only was prognathic. The customary type of jaw, therefore, was orthognathic\*.

\* Other cranial characters are compared by Sir William Turner, for which I would refer the reader to the original article,

The conclusion at which Sir William Turner arrives is that " by a careful comparison of Australian and Dravidian crania, there ought not to be much difficulty in distinguishing one from the other. The comparative study of the



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characters of the two series of crania has not led me to the conclusion that they can be adduced in support of the theory of the unity of the two people."

The Dravidians of Southern India are divided by Sir Herbert Risley\* into two main groups, the Scytho-Dravidian and the Dravidian, which he sums up as follows :

"The Scytho- Dravidian type of Western India, comprising the Maratha Brahman s, the Kunbis and the Coorgs ; probably formed by a mixture of Scythian and Dravidian elements, the former predominating in the higher groups, the latter in the lower. The head is broad ; complexion fair ; hair on face rather scanty ; stature medium ; nose moderately fine, and not conspicuously long.

\* The People of India, 1908.

“The Dravidian type extending from Ceylon to the valley of the Ganges, and pervading the whole of Madras, Hyderabad, the Central



Provinces, most of Central India, and Chutia Nagpur. Its most characteristic representatives are the Paniyans of the South Indian Hills and the Santals of Chutia Nagpur. Probably the original type of the population of India, now modified to a varying extent by the admixture of Aryan, Scythian, and Mongoloid elements. In typical specimens, the stature is short or below mean ; the complexion very dark, approaching black ; hair plentiful with an occasional tendency to curl ; eyes dark ; head long ; nose very broad, sometimes depressed at the root, but not so as to make the face appear flat."

It is, it will be noted, observed by Risley that the head of the Scytho-Dravidian is broad, and that of the Dravidian long. Writing some years ago concerning the Dravidian head with reference to a statement in Taylor's " Origin of the Aryans,"\* that " the Todas are fully dolichocephalic, differing in this respect from the Dravidians, who are brachycephalic," I published\*\* certain statistics based on the





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measurements of a number of subjects in the southern districts of the Madras Presidency.

\* Contemporary Science Series.

\*\* Madras Museum Bull., II, 3, 1899.

These figures showed that "the average cephalic index of 639 members of 19 different castes and tribes was 74.1 ; and that, in only 19 out of the 639 individuals, did the index exceed 80. So far then from the Dravidian being separated from the Todas by reason of their higher cephalic index, this index is, in the Todas, actually higher than in some of the Dravidian peoples."

Accustomed as I was, in my wanderings among the Tamil and Malayalam folk, to deal with heads in which the dolichocephalic or sub-dolichocephalic type preponderates, I was amazed to find, in the course of an expedition in the Bellary district (in the Canarese area), that the question of the type of the Dravidian head was not nearly so simple and straightforward as





I had imagined. My records of head measurements now include a very large series taken in the plains in the Tulu, Canarese, Telugu, Malayalam, and Tamil areas, and the measurements of a few Maratha (non-Dravidian) classes settled in the Canarese country. In the following tabular statement, I have brought together, for the purpose of comparison, the records of the head-measurements of representative classes in each of these areas :

Class.				Language.	Number of subjects examined.	Cephalic Index.			Number of times index was 80 or above.
						Average.	Maximum, cm.	Minimum, cm.	
Sukun Sālē	...	...	...	Marāthi	30	82·2	90·0	73·9	21
Suka Sālē	...	...	...	Do.	30	81·8	88·2	76·1	22
Vakkaliga	...	...	...	Canarese	50	81·7	93·8	72·5	27
Billava	...	...	...	Tulu	50	80·1	91·5	71·0	27
Rangāri	...	...	...	Marāthi	30	79·8	92·2	70·7	14
Agasa	...	...	...	Canarese	40	78·5	85·7	73·2	13
Bant	...	...	...	Tulu	40	78·0	91·2	70·8	12
Kāpu	...	...	...	Telugu	49	78·0	87·6	71·6	16
Tota Baliya	...	...	...	Do.	39	78·0	86·0	73·3	10
Bōya	...	...	...	Do.	50	77·9	89·2	70·5	14
Dāsa Banajiga	...	...	...	Canarese	40	77·8	86·2	72·0	11
Gāniga	...	...	...	Do.	50	77·6	85·9	70·5	11
Golla	...	...	...	Telugu	60	77·5	89·3	70·1	9
Kuruba	...	...	...	Canarese	50	77·3	83·9	69·6	10
Bestha	...	...	...	Telugu	60	77·1	85·1	70·5	9
Pallan	...	...	...	Tamil	50	75·9	87·0	70·1	6
Mukkuvan	...	...	...	Malayālam	40	75·1	83·5	68·6	2
Nāyar	...	...	...	Do.	40	74·4	81·9	70·0	1
Vellāla	...	...	...	Tamil	40	74·1	81·1	67·9	2
Agamudaiyan	...	...	...	Do.	40	74·0	80·9	66·7	1
Paraiyan	...	...	...	Do.	40	73·6	78·3	64·8	...
Palli	...	...	...	Do.	40	73·0	80·0	64·4	1
Tiyan	...	...	...	Malayālam	40	73·0	78·9	68·6	...



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The difference in the character of the cranium is further brought out by the following tables, in which the details of the cephalic indices of typical classes in the five linguistic areas under consideration are recorded :

(a) TULU. BILLAVA.									
71	◆	◆							
72	◆	◆							
73	◆								
74									
75									
76	◆	◆	◆						
77	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆				
78	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆			
79	◆	◆							
80	◆	◆	...	...	...	...	Average.		
81	◆	◆	◆						
82	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆				
83	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	
84	◆	◆	◆	◆					
85	◆	◆	◆	◆					
86	◆								
87									
88									
89									
90	◆								
91	◆								
(b) CANARESE. VAKKALIGA.									
73	◆								
74									
75	◆	◆							
76	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆				
77	◆	◆							
78	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆				
79	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆		
80	◆	◆							
81	◆	◆	◆						
82	◆	◆	◆		...	...	...	Average.	
83	◆	◆	◆						
84	◆	◆							
85	◆	◆	◆						
86	◆	◆	◆						





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These tables not only bring out the difference in the cephalic index of the classes selected as representative of the different areas, but further show that there is a greater constancy in the Tamil and Malayalam classes than in the Tulus, Canarese and Telugus. The number of individuals clustering round the average is conspicuously greater in the two former than in the three latter. I am not prepared to hazard any new theory to account for the marked difference in the type of cranium in the various areas under consideration, and must content myself with the observation that, whatever may have been the influence which has brought about the existing sub-brachycephalic or mesaticephalic type in the northern areas, this influence has not extended southward into the Tamil and Malayalam countries, where Dravidian man remains dolicho- or sub-dolichocephalic.

As an excellent example of constancy of type in the cephalic index, I may cite, *en passant*, the following results of measurement of the Todas,





who inhabit the plateau of the Nilgiri hills :



I pass on to the consideration of the type of cranium among various Brahman classes. In the following tables, the results of measurement of representatives of Tulu, Canarese, Marathi, Tamil and Malayalam Brahmans are recorded :

Class.	Language.	Number of sub- jects examined.	Cephalic Index.			Number of times index was 80 and over.
			Average.	Maximum.	Minimum.	
Shivalli ... ..	Tulu ... ..	30	80.4	96.4	69.4	17
Mandya ... ..	Canarese ...	50	80.2	88.2	69.8	31
Karnataka ..	Do, ...	60	78.4	89.5	69.8	19
Smarta (D̄sastha).	Marāthi *	43	76.9	87.1	71	9
Tamil (Madras city).	Tamil ... ..	40	76.5	84.	69	3
Nambūtiri ...	Malayālam †	..	76.3	...	...	...
Pattar ... ..	Tamil ‡	25	74.5	81.4	69.1	2

\* The cephalic indices of various Brahman classes in the Bombay Presidency, supplied by Sir H. Risley, are as follows :—Desastha, 76.9 ; Kokanasth, 77.3 ; Sheni or Saraswat, 79 ; Nagar, 79.7.

\*\* Measured by Mr. F. Fawcett.

\*\*\* The Pattar Brahmans are Tamil Brahmans,



settled in Malabar

69	◆
70	
71	
72	◆
73	◆
74	
75	
76	◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
77	
78	◆ ◆ ◆
79	◆ ◆ ◆
80	◆ ◆ ... .. Average.
81	◆ ◆ ◆
82	◆ ◆ ◆ ◆
83	◆ ◆
84	◆ ◆
85	
86	◆
87	
88	◆
89	◆
90	
91	
92	
93	
94	
95	
96	◆

70 ♦

71 ♦ ♦

72 ♦ ♦

73 ♦ ♦

74 ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

75 ♦ ♦ ♦

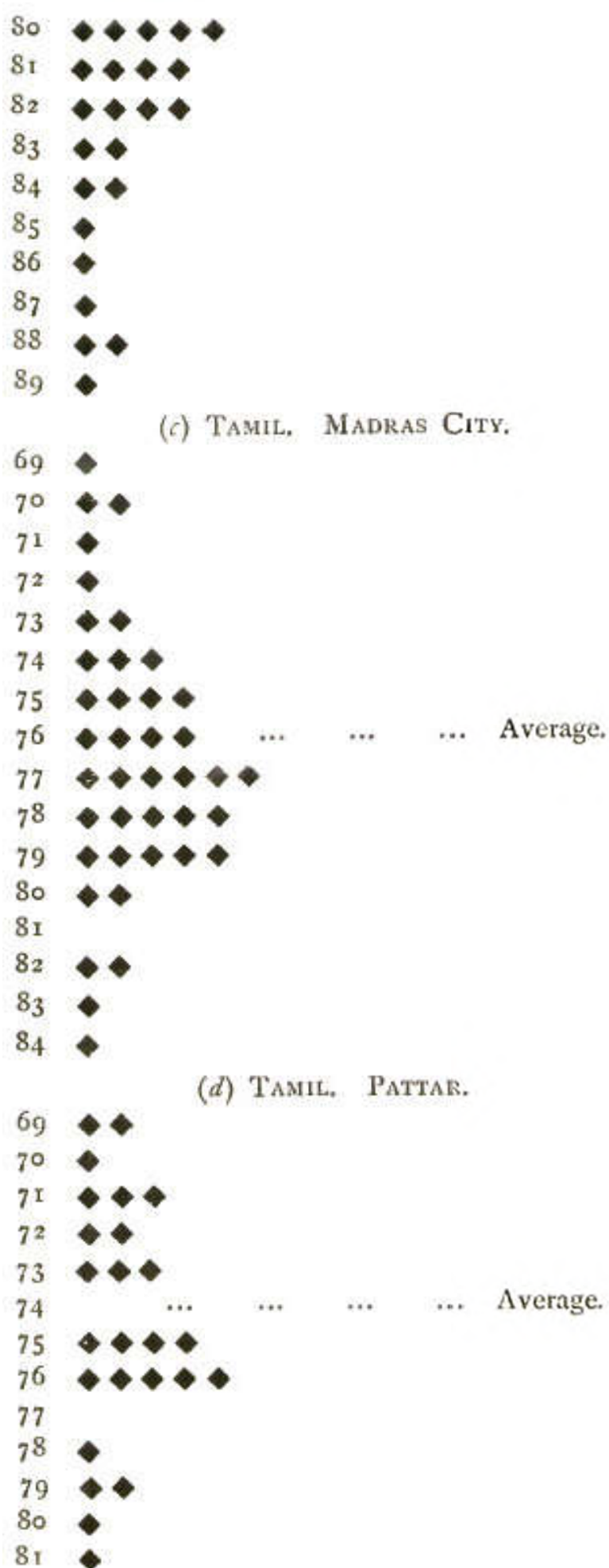
76 ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

77 ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

78 ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ... Average.

79 ♦ ♦

D\*



Taking the evidence of the figures, they demonstrate that, like the other classes which have been analysed, the Brahmans have a higher cephalic index, with a wider range, in the northern than in the southern area.

There is a tradition that the Shivalli Brahmans of the Tulu country came from Ahikshetra. As only males migrated from their home, they were compelled to take women from non- Brahman





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castes as wives. The ranks are said to have been swelled by conversions from these castes during the time of Sri Madhvacharya. The Shivalli Brahmans are said to be referred to by the Bants as Mathumaglu or Mathmalu (bride) in allusion to the fact of their wives being taken from the Bant caste. Besides the Shivallis, there are other Tulu Brahmans, who are said to be recent converts. The Matti Brahmans were formerly considered low by the Shivallis, and were not allowed to sit in the same line with the Shivallis at meal time. They were only permitted to sit in a cross line, separated from the Shivallis, though in the same room. This was because the Matti Brahmans were supposed to be Mogers (fishing caste) raised to Brahmanism by one Vathiraja Swami, a Sanyasi. Having become Brahmans, they could not carry on their hereditary occupation, and, to enable them to earn a livelihood, the Sanyasi gave them some brinjal (*Solanum Melongena*) seeds, and advised them to cultivate the plant. From this



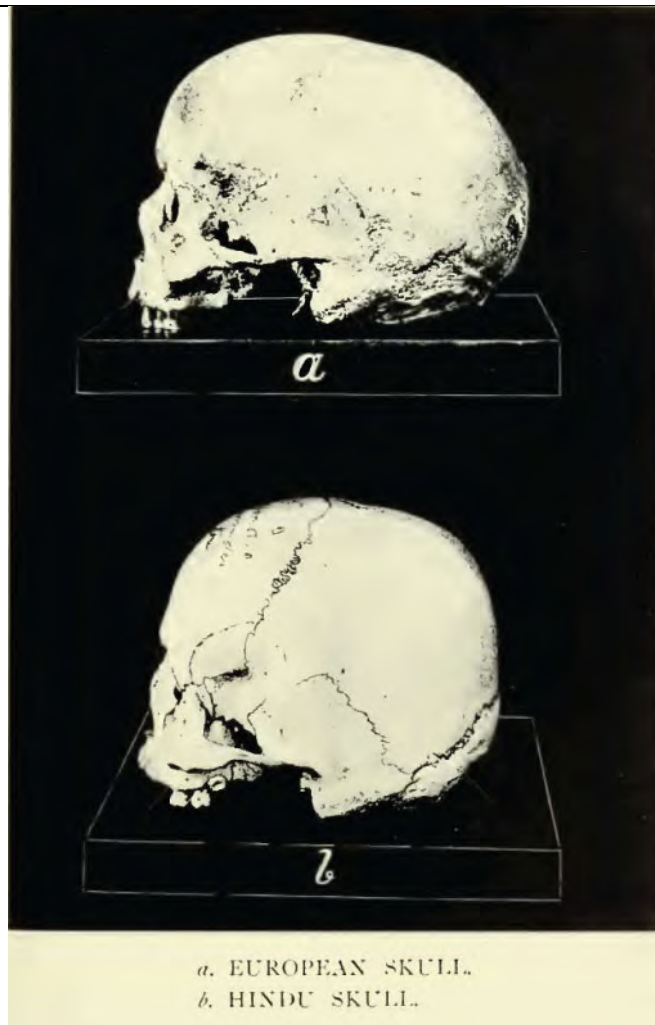


fact, the variety of brinjal, which is cultivated at Matti, is called Vathiraja gulla. At the present day, the Matti Brahmans are on a par with the Shivalli Brahmans, and have become disciples of the Sodhe mutt (religious institution) at Udipi. In some of the popular accounts of Brahmans, which have been reduced to writing, it is stated that, during the time of Mayura Varma of the Kadamba dynasty,\* some Andhra Brahmans were brought into South Canara. As a sufficient number of Brahmans were not available for the purpose of yagams (sacrifices), these Andhra Brahmans selected a number of families from the non- Brahman caste, made them Brahmans, and chose exogamous sept names for them. Of these names, Manuli (*Cephalandra Indica*), Perala (*Psidium Guyava*), Kudire (horse), and Ane (elephant) are examples.

\* According to the Brahman chronology, Mayura Varma reigned from 455 to 445 B.C., but his probable date was about 750 A.D. See Fleet, *Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts of the Bombay Presidency*, 1882-86.



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A character, with which I am very familiar, when measuring the heads of all sorts and conditions of natives of Southern India, is the absence of convexity of the segment formed by the posterior portion of the united parietal bones. The result of this absence of convexity is that the back of the head, instead of forming a curve gradually increasing from the top of the head towards the occipital region, as in the European skull figured in plate IIIa, forms a flattened area of considerable length almost at right angles to the base of the skull as in the "Hindu" skull represented in plate IIIb. This character is shown in a marked degree in plate



IV, which represents a prosperous Linga Banajiga in the Canarese country.

In discussing racial admixture, Ouatrefages writes as follows, \* *"Parfois on trouve encore quelques tribus qui ont conserve plus on moins intacts tous les caracteres de leur race. Les Coorumbas du Malwar [Malabar] et du Coorg paraissent former un noyau plus considerable encore, et avoir conserve dans les jungles de Wynaad une independence a peu pres complete, et tous leurs caracteres ethnologiques."*

\* Histoire generale des Races Humaines, 1889.

The purity of blood and ethnological characters of various jungle tribes are unhappily becoming lost as the result of contact metamorphosis from the opening up of the jungles for planter's estates, and contact with more civilised tribes and races, both brown and white. In illustration, I may cite the Kanikars of Travancore, who till recently were in the habit of





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sending all their women into the seclusion of the jungle on the arrival of a stranger near their settlements. This is now seldom done, and some Kanikars have in modern times settled in the vicinity of towns, and become domesticated. The primitive short, dark-skinned and platyrhine type, though surviving, has become changed, and many leptorhine or mesorhine individuals above middle height are to be met with. The following are the results of measurements of Kanikars in the jungle, and at a village some miles from Trivandrum, the capital of Travancore :

—			Stature cm.			Nasal Index.		
			Av.	Max.	Min.	Av.	Max.	Min.
Jungle	...	...	155·2	170·3	150·2	84·6	105	72·3
Domesticated	...	...	158·7	170·4	148	81·2	90·5	70·8

Some jungle Chenchus, who inhabit the Nallamalai hills in the Kurnool district, still exhibit the primitive short stature and high nasal index, which are characteristic of the unadulterated jungle tribes. But there is a very





conspicuous want of uniformity in their physical characters, and many individuals are to be met with, above middle height, or tall, with long narrow noses. A case is recorded, in which a brick-maker married a Chenchu girl. And I was told of a Boya man who had married into the tribe, and was living in a gudem (Chenchu settlement).

Stature cm.			Nasal Index.		
Av.	Max.	Min.	Av.	Max.	Min.
162·5	175	149·6	81·9	95·7	68·1

By the dolichocephalic type of cranium which has persisted, and which the Chenchus possess in common with various other jungle tribes, they are still, as shown by the following table, at once differentiated from the mesaticephalic dwellers in the plains near the foot of the Nallamalais.

In a note on the jungle tribes, M. Louis Lapicque,\* who carried out anthropometric observations in Southern India a few years ago, writes as follows. "*Dans les montagnes des*



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*Nilghirris et d'AnemaM, situees au coeude la contr^e dravidienne, on a signale depuis longtemps des petits sauvages crepus, qu'on a meme pense pouvoir, sur des documents insuffisants, identifier avec les negritos. En realite, it n'existe pas dans ces montagnes, ni probablement nulle part dans l'Inde, un temoin de la race primitive comparable, comme purete, aux Andamanais ni meme aux autres Negritos. Ce que Ton trouve la, c'est simplement, mais c'est fort precieux, une population metisse qui continue au dela du Paria la serie generale de l'Inde, Au bord de la foret vierge ou dans les collines partiellement defrichees, il y a des castes demi-Parias, demi-sauvages. La hierarchie sociale les classe au-dessous du Paria ; on peut meme trouver des groupes ou le facies negre, nettement dessine, est tout a fait predominant. Ehbien, dans ces groupes, les chevelures sont en general frisees, et on en observe quelques-unes qu'on peut meme appeler crepues. On a donc le moyen de*



*prolonger par l'imagination la serie des castes indiennes jusqu'au type primitif qui etait (nous n'avons plus qu'un pas a faire pour le reconstruire), un Negre . . . Nous sommes arrives a reconstituer les traits negres d'un type disparu en prolongeant une serie graduee de metis. Par la meme methode nous pouvons determiner theoriquement la forme du crane de ce type. Avec une assez grande certitude, je crois pouvoir affirmer, apres de nombreuses mesures systematiques, que le negre primitif de l'Inde etait sousdolichocephale avec un indice voisin de 75 ou 76. Sa taille, plus difficile a preciser, car les conditions de vie modifient ce caractere, devait etre petite, plus haute pourtant que celle des Andamanais. Quant au nom qu'il convient de lui attribuer, la discussion des faits sociaux et linguistiques sur lesquels est fondee la notion de dravidien permet d'^tablir que ce negre etait anterieur aux dravidiens ; il faut donc rappcller Prddravidien, ou, si nous voulons lui donner un nom qui ne soit pas relatif a une*



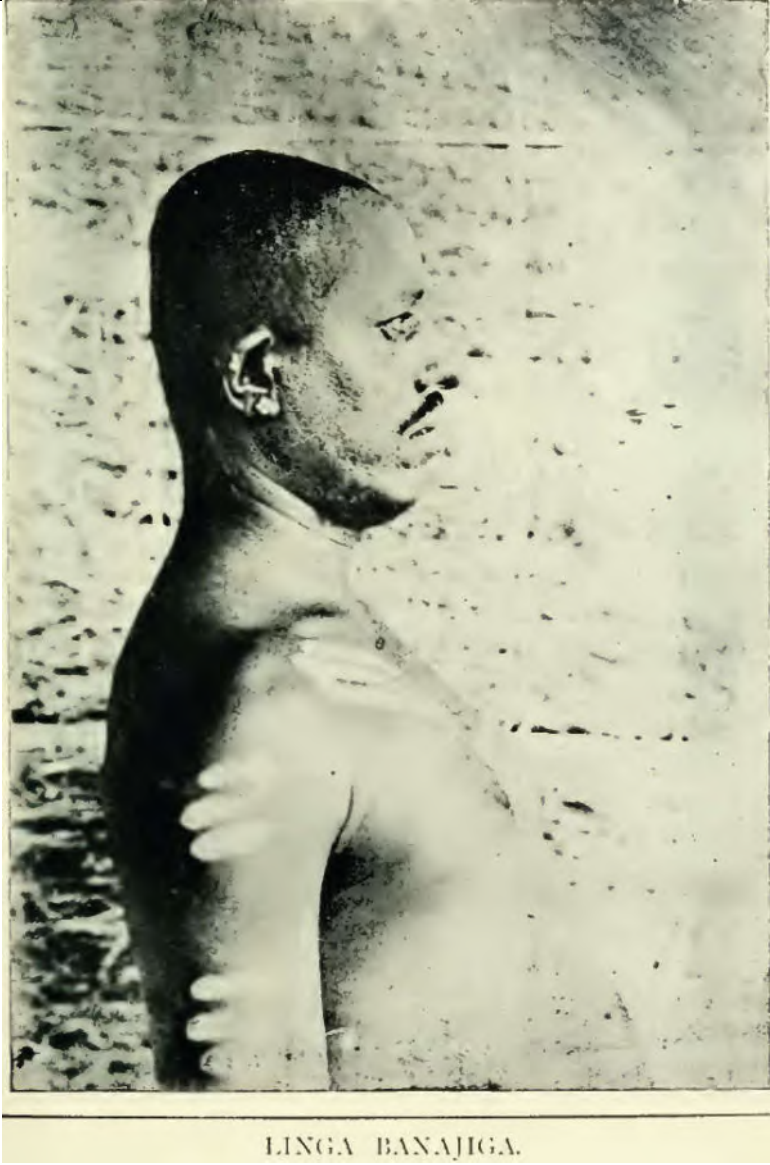


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autre population, on pent Tappeler Negre Pariay".

\* Les Negres d'Asie, et la race Negre en general.  
Revue Scientifique, VI July, 1906.



In support of M. Lapicque's statement that the primitive inhabitant was dolichocephalic or subdolichocephalic, I may produce the evidence of the cephalic indices of the various jungle tribes which I have examined in the Tamil, Malayalam, and Telugu countries :

Cephalic Index.						Average.	Maximum.	Minimum.
—								
Kādir	...	...	...	...	...	72·9	80·0	69·1
Irula, Chingleput	...	...	...	...	...	73·1	78·6	68·4
Kānikar	...	...	...	...	...	73·4	78·9	69·1
Mala Vēdan	...	...	...	...	...	73·4	80·9	68·8
Panaiyan	...	...	...	...	...	74·0	81·1	69·4
Cherchu	...	...	...	...	...	74·3	80·5	64·3
Shōlaga	...	...	...	...	...	74·9	79·3	67·8
Paliyan	...	...	...	...	...	75·7	79·1	72·9
Irula, Nilgiris	...	...	...	...	...	75·8	80·9	70·8
Kurumba	...	...	...	...	...	76·5	83·3	71·8





It is worthy of note that Haeckel defines the nose of the Dravidian as a prominent and narrow organ. For Riskey has laid down \* that, in the Dravidian type, the nose is thick and broad, and the formula expressing the proportionate dimension (nasal index) is higher than in any known race, except the Negro ; and that the typical Dravidian, as represented by the Male Paharia, has a nose as broad in proportion to its length as the Negro, while this feature in the Aryan group can fairly bear comparison with the noses of sixty-eight Parisians, measured by Topinard, which gave an average of 69.4.

\* Tribes and Castes of Bengal, 1891.

In this connection, I may record the statistics relating to the nasal indices of various South Indian jungle tribes :

	Nasal Index.		
	Average.	Maximum.	Minimum.
Paniyan ... ..	95·1	108·6	72·9
Kādir ... ..	89·8	115·4	72·9
Kurumba ... ..	86·1	111·1	70·8
Shōlaga ... ..	85·1	107·7	72·8
Mala Vēdan ... ..	84·9	102·6	71·1
Irula, Nīlgiris ... ..	84·9	100·	72·3
Kānikar ... ..	84·6	105·	72·3
Chenchu ... ..	81·9	95·7	68·1



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In the following table, I have brought together, for the purpose of comparison, the average stature and nasal index of various Dravidian classes inhabiting the plains of the Telugu, Tamil, Canarese, and Malayalam countries, and jungle tribes :

—	Linguistic area.			Nasal Index.	Stature.
Paniyan ... ..	Jungle tribe ... ..			95·1	157·4
Kādir ... ..	Do. ... ..			89·8	157·7
Kurumba ... ..	Do. ... ..			86·1	157·9
Shōlaga ... ..	Do. ... ..			85·1	159·3
Irula, Nīlgiris ... ..	Do. ... ..			84·9	159·8
Mala Vēdan ... ..	Do. ... ..			84·9	154·2
Kānikar ... ..	Do. ... ..			84·6	155·2
Chenchu ... ..	Do. ... ..			81·9	162·5
Pallan ... ..	Tamil ... ..			81·5	164·3
Mukkuvan ... ..	Malayālam ... ..			81·	163·1
Paraiyan ... ..	Tamil ... ..			80·	163·1
Palli ... ..	Do. ... ..			77·9	162·5
Gāniga ... ..	Canarese ... ..			76·1	165·8
Bestha ... ..	Telugu ... ..			75·9	165·7
Tiyan ... ..	Malayālam ... ..			75·	163·7

—	Linguistic area.			Nasal Index.	Stature.
Kuruba ... ..	Canarese ... ..			74·9	162·7
Bōya ... ..	Telugu ... ..			74·4	163·9
Tōta Balija ... ..	Do. ... ..			74·4	163·9
Agasa ... ..	Canarese ... ..			74·3	162·4
Agamudaiyan ... ..	Tamil ... ..			74·2	165·8
Golla ... ..	Telugu ... ..			74·1	163·8
Vellāla ... ..	Tamil ... ..			73·1	162·4
Vakkaliga ... ..	Canarese ... ..			73·	167·2
Dāsa Banajiga ... ..	Do. ... ..			72·8	165·3
Kāpu ... ..	Telugu ... ..			72·8	164·5
Nāyar ... ..	Malayalam ... ..			71·1	165·2

This table demonstrates very clearly an unbroken series ranging from the jungle men, short of stature and platyrrhine, to the leptorrhine Nayars and other classes.





In plate V are figured a series of triangles representing (natural size) the maxima, minima, and average nasal indices of Brahmans of Madras city (belonging to the poorer classes), Tamil Paraiyans, and Paniyans. There is obviously far less connection between the Brahman minimum and the Paraiyan maximum than between the Brahman and Paraiyan maxima and the Paniyan average ; and the frequent occurrence of high nasal indices, resulting from short, broad noses, in many classes has to be accounted for. Sir Alfred Lyall somewhere refers to the gradual Brahmanising of the aboriginal non-Aryan, or casteless tribes. "They pass," he writes, "into Brahmanists by a natural upward transition, which leads them to adopt the religion of the castes immediately above them in the social scale of the composite population, among which they settle down ; and we may reasonably guess that this process has been working for centuries." In the Madras Census Report, 1891, Mr. H. A.

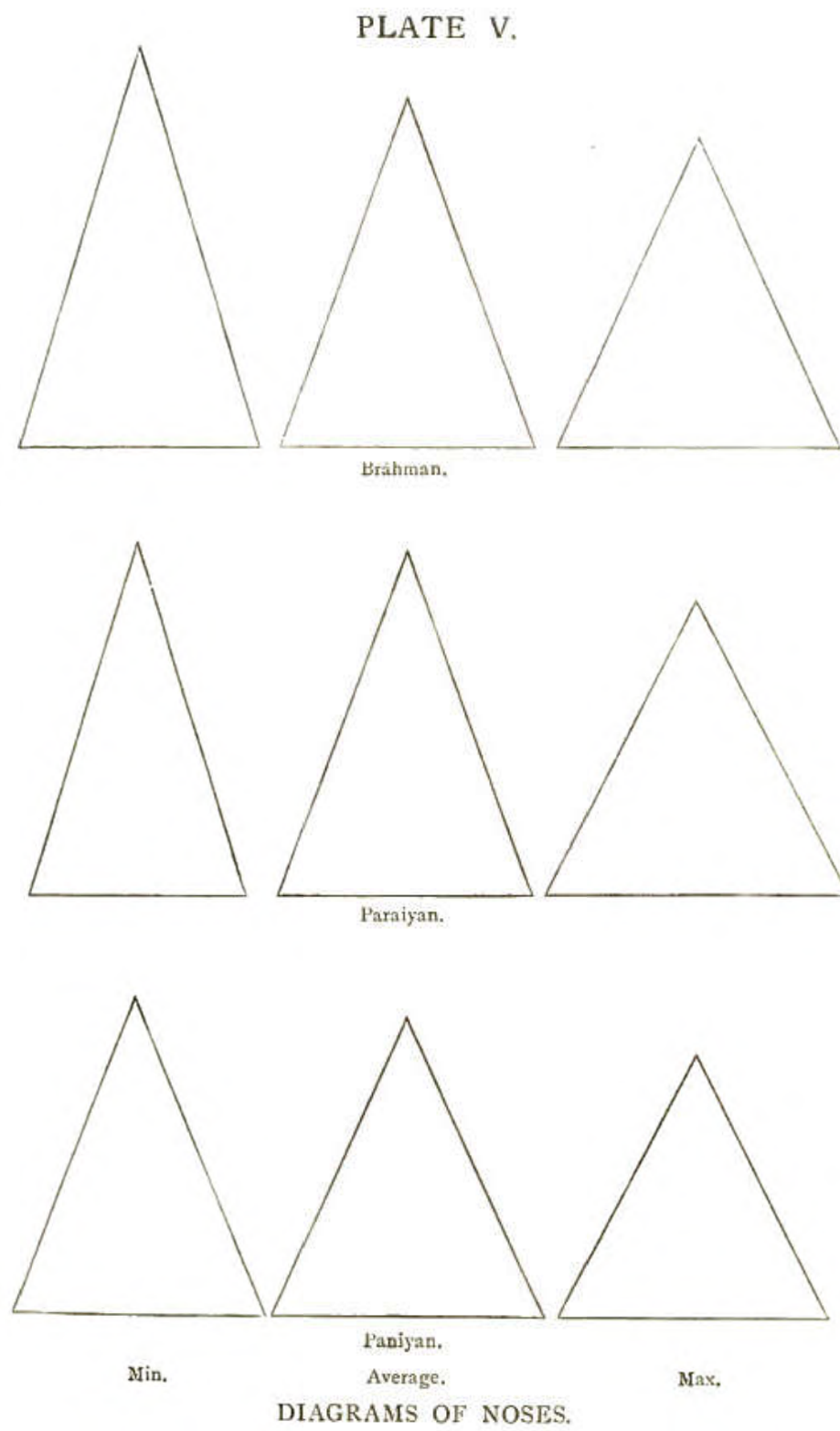


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Stuart states that " it has often been asserted, and is now the creneral belief, that the Brahmans of the South are not pure Aryans, but arc a mixed Aryan and Dravidian race. In the earHest times, the caste division was much less rigid than now, and a person of another caste could become a Brahman by attaining the Brahmanical standard of knowledge, and assuming Brahmanical functions ; and, when we see the Nambudiri Brahmans, even at the present day, contracting alliances, informal though they be, with the women of the country, it is not difficult to believe that, on their first arrival, such unions were even more common, and that the children born of them would be recognised as Brahmans, though perhaps regarded as an inferior class. However, those Brahmans, in whose veins mixed blood is supposed to run, are even to this day regarded as lower in the social scale, and are not allowed to mix freely with the pure Brahman community."





Popular traditions allude to wholesale conversions of non-Brahmans into Brahmans. According to such traditions. Rajas used to feed very large numbers of Brahmans (a lakh of Brahmans) in expiation of some sin, or to gain religious merit. To make up this large number, non-Brahmans are said to have been made Brahmans at the bidding of the Rajas. Here and there are found a few sections of Brahmans, whom the more orthodox Brahmans do not recognise as such, though the ordinary members of the community regard them as an



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inferior class of Brahmans. As an instance may be cited the Marakas of the Mysore Province. Though it is difficult to disprove the claim put forward by these people, some demur to their being regarded as Brahmans.

Between a Brahman of high culture, with fair complexion, and long, narrow nose on the one hand, and a less highly civilised Brahman with dark skin and short broad nose on the other, there is a vast difference, which can only be reasonably explained on the assumption of racial admixture ; and it is no insult to the higher members of the Brahman community to trace, in their more lowly brethren, the result of crossing with a darkskinned, and broad-nosed race of short stature. Whether the jungle tribe are, as I believe, the microscopic remnant of a pre-Dravidian people, or, as some hold, of Dravidians driven by a conquering race to the seclusion of the jungles, it is to the lasting influence of some such broad-nosed ancestor that the high nasal index of many of the



inhabitants of Southern India must, it seems to me, be attributed. Viewed in the light of this remark, the connection between the following mixed collection of individuals, all of very dark colour, short of stature, and with nasal index exceeding 90, calls for no explanation :

—				Stature.	Nasal height.	Nasal breadth.	Nasal Index.
				cm.	cm.	cm.	
Vakkaliga	.	...	...	156	4'3	3'9	90'7
Möger	...	...	...	160	4'3	3'9	90'7
Saiyad Muhammadan	...	..		160	4'4	4	90'9
Kammalan	...	...	...	154'4	4'4	4	90'9
Chakkiliyan	...	...	...	156'8	4'4	4	90'9
Vellāla	...	...	...	154'8	4'7	4'3	91'6
Malaiyāli	...	...	...	158'8	4	3'7	92'5
Konga Vellāla	...	...	...	157	4'1	3'8	92'7
Pattar Brāhman	...	...		157'6	4'2	3'9	92'9
Oddē	...	...	...	159'6	4'3	4	93
Smarta Brāhman	...	...		159	4'1	3'9	95'1
Palli	...	...	...	157'8	4'1	3'9	95'1
Pallan	...	..	...	155'8	4'2	4'2	100
Bestha	...	...	...	156'8	4'3	4'3	100
Mukkuvan	...	...	...	150'8	4	4	100
Agasa	...	...	...	156'4	4'3	4'3	100
Tamil Paraiyan	...	...	..	160	4	4'2	105

I pass on to a brief consideration of the languages of Southern India. According to Mr. G. A. Grierson \* "the Dravidian family comprises all the principal languages of Southern India. The name Dravidian is a conventional one. It is derived from the Sanskrit Dravida, a word which is again probably derived from an older Dramila, Damila, and is identical with the name of Tamil.





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The name Dravidian is, accordingly, identical with Tamulian, which name has formerly been used by European writers as a common designation of the languages in question. The word Dravida forms part of the denomination Andhra-Dravida-bhasha, the language of the Andhras (i.e., Telugu), and Dravidas (i.e., Tamilians), which Kumarila Bhatta (probably 7th Century A.D.) employed to denote the Dravidian family. In India Dravida has been used in more than one sense. Thus the so-called five Dravidas are Telugu, Kanarese, Marathi, Gujarati, and Tamil. In Europe, on the other hand, Dravidian has long been the common denomination of the whole family of languages to which Bishop Caldwell applied it in his Comparative Grammar, and there is no reason for abandoning the name which the founder of Dravidian philology applied to this group of speeches."

\* Linguistic Survey of India, IV, 1906.





The five principal languages are Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Canarese, and Oriya. Of these, Oriya belongs to the eastern group of the Indo-Aryan family, and is spoken in Ganjam, and a portion of the Vizagapatam district. The population speaking each of these languages, as recorded at the census, 1901, was as follows

Tamil	...	...	...	...	15,543,383
Telugu	...	...	...	...	14,315,304
Malayālam	...	...	...	...	2,854,145
Oriya	...	...	...	...	1,809,336
Canarese	...	...	...	...	1,530,688

In the preparation of the following brief summary of the other vernacular languages and dialects, I have indented mainly on the Linguistic Survey of India, and the Madras Census Report, 1901.

**Savara.**—The language of the Savaras of Ganjam and Vizagapatam. One of the Munda languages. Concerning the Munda linguistic family, Mr. Grierson writes as follows. "The



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denomination Munda (adopted by Max Miiller) was not long allowed to stand unchallenged. Sir George Campbell in 1866 proposed to call the family Kolarian. He was of opinion that Kol had an older form Kolar, which he thought to be identical with Kanarese Kallar, thieves. There is absolutely no foundation for this supposition. Moreover, the name Kolarian is objectionable, as seeming to suggest a connexion with Aryan which does not exist. The principal home of the Munda languages at the present day is the Chota Nagpur plateau. The Munda race is much more widely spread than the Munda languages. It has already been remarked that it is identical with the Dravidian race, which forms the bulk of the population of Southern India."

**Gadaba.**—Spoken by the Gadabas of Vizagapatam and Ganjam. One of the Munda languages.

**Kond, Kandhi, or Kui.**—The language of the Kondhs of Ganjam and Vizagapatam.

**Gondi.**—The language of the Gonds, a tribe



which belongs to the Central Provinces, but has overflowed into Ganjam and Vizagapatam.

**Gattu.**—A dialect of Condi, spoken by some of the Gonds in Vizagapatam.

**Koya or Koi.**—A dialect of Gondi, spoken by the Koyis in the Vizagapatam and Godavari districts.

**Poroja Pajra, or Parji.**—A dialect of Gondi.

**Tulu.**—The language largely spoken in South Canara (the ancient Tuluva). It is described by Bishop Caldwell as one of the most highly developed languages of the Dravidian family.

**Koraga.**—Spoken by the Koragas of South Canara. It is thought by Mr. H. A. Stuart\* to be a dialect of Tulu.

**Bellera.**—Spoken by the Belleras of South Canara, and regarded as a dialect of Canarese or Tulu.

**Toda.**—The language of the Todas of the Nilgiri hills, concerning which Dr. W. H. R. Rivers writes as follows.\* " Bernhard Schmid,\*\*





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who wrote in 1837, appears to have known more of the true Toda language than any one who has written since, and he ascribes two-thirds of the Toda vocabulary to Tamil, and was unable to trace the remaining third to any other language. Caldwell\*\*\* believed the language of the Todas to be most closely allied to Tamil. According to Pope\*\*\*\*, the language was originally old Canarese with the addition of a few Tamil forms, but he has included in his vocabulary words which have probably been borrowed from the Badagas."

**Kota.**—A mixture of Canarese and Tamil spoken by the Kotas of the Nilgiri hills.

**Badaga.**—The language of the Badagas of the Nilgiri hills. Said to be an ancient form of Canarese.

\* The Todas, 1906.

\*\* Madras Journ., Lit. and Sci., V., 1837.

\*\*\* Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages. 2nd Ed., 1875.

\*\*\*\* Outlines of the Toda Grammar appended to Marshall's





Phrenologist among the Todas.

**Irula.**—Spoken by the Irulas of the Nilgiris, and said to be a dialect of Tamil. According to Mr. Stuart, Kasuba or Kasuva is another dialect of Tamil spoken by the sub-division of the Irulas which bears the same name.

**Kurumba.**—Spoken by the Kurumbas of the Nilgiri hills, Malabar, and Mysore, and regarded as a dialect of Canarese.

**Konkani.**—A dialect of Marathi, spoken almost entirely in the South Canara district by Sarasvat and Konkani Brahmans and Roman Catholic Christians.

**Marathi.**—In the Tanjore district, the descendants of the former Maratha Rajas of Tanjore speak this language. It is also spoken in the Bellary district, which was formerly under Maratha dominion, by various Maratha castes, and in the feudatory State of Sandur. **Patnuli or Khatri.**—A dialect of Gujarati, spoken by the



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Patnulkarans who have settled for the most part in the town of Madura. They are immigrants from Saurashtra in Gujarat, who are said to have come south at the invitation of the Nayak kings of Madura.

**Lambadi.**—The language of the nomad Lambadis, Brinjaris, or Sugalis. It is described by Mr. W. Francis\* as a patois " usually based on one of the local vernaculars, and embroidered and diversified with thieves' slang and expressions borrowed from the various localities in which the tribe has sojourned. Cust thought that Lambadi was Semi-Dravidian, but the point is not clear, and it has been classed as Indo-Aryan."

\* Madras Census Report, 1901.

**Korava or Yerukala.**—A dialect of Tamil spoken by the nomad caste bearing these names. Like the Lambadis, they have a thieves' slang.

**Vadari.**—Recorded as a vulgar Telugu dialect





spoken by a wandering tribe of quarrymen in the Bombay Presidency, the Berars, and elsewhere. They are doubtless Oddes or Wudder navvies, who have migrated from their

home in the Telugu country.

TABLE A.												
HEAD MEASUREMENTS.												
C. = Canarese. J. = Jungle Tribe.			M. = Malayalam. Mar. = Marathi.			Tam. = Tamil. Tel. = Teluga.			Tu. = Tulu.			
—	No.	Caste or Tribe.	Length cm.			Breadth cm.			Index.			Index 80 and over.
			Av.	Max.	Min.	Av.	Max.	Min.	Av.	Max.	Min.	
...	40	Badga, Nilgiris ... ..	18.9	20.2	18.	13.6	14.5	12.8	71.7	77.5	66.1	0
M.	18	Kanikar ... ..	18.8	19.5	18.2	13.6	14.2	13.	72.5	76.1	68.1	0
M.	40	Mappilla, Muhammadan ...	18.9	20.	18.	13.7	14.6	13.	72.8	78.5	68.	0
J.	23	Kadir ... ..	18.4	19.4	17.2	13.4	13.8	12.5	72.9	80.	69.	1
M.	40	Tiyar ... ..	18.9	20.3	17.8	13.7	14.9	12.6	73.	80.3	68.5	1

TABLE A—continued.												
—	No.	Caste or Tribe.	Length cm.			Breadth cm.			Index.			Index 80 and over.
			Av.	Max.	Min.	Av.	Max.	Min.	Av.	Max.	Min.	
Tam.	40	Palli ... ..	18.6	19.6	17.4	13.6	14.6	12.1	73.	80.	64.4	1
Tam.	40	Iruia ... ..	18.5	19.6	17.	13.5	14.4	12.8	73.1	78.6	68.4	0
...	82	Toda, Nilgiris ... ..	19.4	20.4	18.2	14.2	15.2	12.3	73.3	81.5	68.7	1
J.	20	Kanikar ... ..	18.5	19.4	17.8	13.6	14.2	13.	73.4	78.9	69.1	0
Tam.	29	Ambattan ... ..	18.6	19.2	18.	13.7	14.6	12.5	73.4	76.9	67.2	0
J.	25	Mala Vidan ... ..	18.5	19.6	17.4	13.6	14.6	13.	73.4	80.9	68.8	1
Tam.	40	Panaiyas ... ..	18.6	19.7	17.	13.7	14.5	12.	73.6	78.3	64.8	0
M.	25	Cheruman ... ..	18.3	19.3	17.1	13.5	14.2	12.3	73.9	80.1	67.7	1
M.	25	Paniyar ... ..	18.4	19.5	17.5	13.6	14.9	13.	74	81.1	69.4	1
Tam.	40	Agumudaiyan ... ..	18.8	20.	17.8	13.9	14.6	12.8	74.	80.9	66.7	1

...	25	Kota, Nilgiris ... ..	19.2	20.2	18.3	14.2	15.1	13.4	74.1	79.1	69.9	0
Tam.	40	Vellala ... ..	18.6	19.6	17.7	13.8	14.6	13.1	74.1	81.1	67.9	2
Tam.	20	Smara Brahman ... ..	18.8	19.2	17.8	14.	14.8	12.	74.2	80.4	67.8	1
Tam.	50	Malayali ... ..	18.3	19.3	17.	13.6	14.4	12.8	74.3	82.8	61.	2
J.	40	Chenchu ... ..	18.2	19.6	17.2	13.5	14.4	12.4	74.3	80.5	64.3	1
M.	40	Nayar ... ..	18.7	19.8	17.4	13.9	15.	13.2	74.4	81.9	70.4	1
Tam.	25	Dattar Brahman ... ..	18.8	20.3	17.2	14.	15.1	13.1	74.5	81.1	69.1	1
Tam.	23	Malasar ... ..	18.2	19.2	17.3	13.5	14.4	12.4	74.5	80.	70.	1
J.	57	Uruli ... ..	18.2	19.3	17.2	13.5	14.4	12.8	74.6	81.6	69.8	1
Tam.	50	Chakkiliyan ... ..	18.6	19.8	17.6	13.9	15.2	13.	74.9	80.6	70.2	1
J.	20	Svöluga ... ..	18.2	19.4	17.2	13.6	14.6	12.2	74.9	79.2	67.8	0
Tel.	30	Madiga, Adoni ... ..	18.6	20.2	17.	13.9	14.6	13.	75.	82.2	71.3	2
Tam.	40	Kammālan ... ..	18.4	19.7	17.3	13.7	14.7	13.1	75.	81.5	68.4	5
M.	40	Mukkuvan ... ..	19.	20.4	17.6	14.2	15.2	13.4	75.1	83.5	68.6	2
Tam.	40	Sheik Muhammadan ...	18.3	20.	19.7	13.8	14.5	12.8	75.0	81.6	74.5	2

TABLE A—continued.												
—	No.	Caste or Tribe.	Length cm.			Breadth cm.			Index.			Index 80 and over.
			Av.	Max.	Min.	Av.	Max.	Min.	Av.	Max.	Min.	
C.	50	Diyani Muhammadan ...	18.5	19.7	17.	14.	15.	13.	75.6	83.3	68.5	8
Tam.	40	Saiyad Muhammadan ...	18.5	19.6	17.2	14.	15.	12.1	75.6	81.9	68.2	1
J.	16	Paliyan ... ..	17.8	18.6	17.1	13.5	14.	13.	75.7	79.1	72.8	0
J.	25	Iruia ... ..	18.	19.1	17.	13.7	14.3	12.1	75.8	80.9	70.8	1
Tam.	50	Falten ... ..	18.3	19.6	17.2	13.6	14.9	12.6	75.9	87.	70.1	6
Tam.	42	Idigian ... ..	18.5	19.	16.8	14.	14.6	12.2	76.	81.9	71.3	5
Tam.	60	Fathar Muhammadan ...	18.5	19.6	17.2	14.2	15.2	12.5	76.2	85.1	71.1	2
M.	74	Pulayan ... ..	18.3	19.3	17.	13.6	15.	13.	76.3	83.	72.3	5
J.	22	Kurumba ... ..	17.9	18.7	16.9	13.7	14.5	13.	76.4	83.3	71.8	1
Tel.	40	Madiga, Hospet ... ..	18.3	20.	17.2	14.	15.4	13.	76.5	85.3	68.	8

C.	50	Sadan ... ..	18.4	19.4	17.	14.1	14.8	13.2	76.6	82.6	72.6	7
C.	40	Toreya ... ..	18.3	19.2	17.2	14.1	15.2	13.	76.6	86.4	70.2	5
Mar.	74	Désatha Brahman ...	18.7	20.2	18.	14.4	15.2	13.2	77.	83.4	71.	4
Tel.	30	Mala ... ..	18.4	19.8	16.8	14.2	14.8	13.4	77.1	85.9	70.3	6
Tel.	60	Beshta ... ..	18.4	19.4	16.6	14.2	15.6	13.2	77.1	85.1	70.5	11
C.	50	Kuruba, Mysore ... ..	18.1	19.4	17.2	14.	15.	12.8	77.3	83.9	70.3	9
Tel.	40	Oddé ... ..	18.2	20.4	17.2	14.1	15.2	13.4	77.3	83.1	70.1	10
Tel.	60	Golla ... ..	18.2	19.6	16.4	14.1	15.1	13.2	77.5	89.3	70.1	12
C.	40	Dāsa Banajiga ... ..	18.6	19.8	17.3	14.4	15.6	13.4	77.8	85.5	72.	11
Tel.	25	Kōmati, Adoni ... ..	18.2	19.4	17.	14.3	15.2	13.3	77.9	88.2	72.2	8
C.	40	Otkiliyan, Coimbatore ...	18.2	19.4	17.	14.2	15.2	13.2	77.9	88.2	71.7	9
C.	50	Bōya ... ..	18.	19.2	16.8	14.	15.2	13.	77.9	89.2	70.5	14
Tu.	40	Bant ... ..	18.5	20.	17.	14.4	16.6	13.1	78.	91.2	70.8	12
Tel.	49	Kāpu ... ..	18.2	19.8	16.8	14.2	15.6	13.2	78.	87.6	71.6	16
Tel.	39	Tōta Balija ... ..	18.1	19.	17.	14.1	15.	13.	78.	86.	73.3	10

TABLE A—continued.												
—	No.	Caste or Tribe.	Length cm.			Breadth cm.			Index.			Index 80 and over.
			Av.	Max.	Min.	Av.	Max.	Min.	Av.	Max.	Min.	
C.	60	Mādiwa Brahman ...	18.4	19.8	16.6	14.3	15.2	13.2	78.	88.5	68.	12
C.	40	Dōdas, Hospet ... ..	18.4	20.	16.8	14.3	15.2	13.2	78.1	85.3	70.8	13
Tel.	38	Uppara ... ..	18.	19.	16.2	14.	15.2	13.2	78.1	82.8	71.7	9
C.	15	Linga Banajiga, Sandūr ...	18.2	19.4	16.6	14.2	15.	13.4	78.3	87.9	73.7	7
C.	60	Karnataka Smarta Brahman.	18.5	20.7	17.	14.4	15.8	13.4	78.4	89.5	66.8	19
Tel.	30	Padma Sālū ... ..	17.8	19.	16.5	14.1	15.1	13.2	78.7	86.2	72.8	10
C.	50	Kuruba, Hospet ... ..	18.1	19.6	17.	14.2	15.4	13.4	78.9	88.4	72.9	19
Tel.	50	Teluga Banajiga ... ..	18.1	19.2	16.6	14.5	15.4	13.2	79.	89.5	71.9	18
C.	50	Panchāla ... ..	18.3	19.4	17.2	14.4	15.6	13.	79.	89.5	71.3	23
C.	50	Holeyā ... ..	17.9	19.6	16.6	14.1	15.2	13.2	79.1	87.1	76.	20





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C.	25	Bēdar, Adoni	...	...	18°1	19°2	17°	14°4	15°	13°6	79°4	85°9	74°1	12
Mar.	30	Rangāri	...	...	18°1	19°8	15°8	14°5	15°4	13°8	79°8	52°2	70°7	14
Tel.	25	Togata	...	...	17°7	19°	10°2	14°2	14°8	13°6	80°	88°1	73°7	13
Tu.	50	Billava	...	...	18°2	20°6	15°4	14°6	15°6	13°2	80°1	51°5	71°	28
C.	30	Linga Banajiga, Adoni	...	...	18°1	19°4	15°7	14°4	15°2	13°6	80°1	87°1	74°1	14
C.	50	Hebbār Brāhman	...	...	18°4	19°6	17°2	14°7	16°4	13°4	80°1	52°1	72°8	21
C.	50	Mandya Brāhman	...	...	18°5	20°2	16°6	14°8	15°8	13°4	80°2	88°2	69°8	31
Tu.	30	Shivallī Brāhman	...	...	18°5	19°6	15°8	14°9	16°2	13°6	80°4	56°4	72°3	17
C.	20	Ganiga	...	...	18°	19°1	15°6	14°4	15°2	14°	80°5	86°7	74°5	11
C.	20	Dēvinga	...	...	18°	19°6	17°	14°5	15°5	13°6	80°8	87°1	74°7	10
Tel.	25	Kōmati	...	...	17°6	18°8	15°4	14°3	14°8	13°4	81°	87°1	74°5	16
C.	50	Vakkaliga, Mysore	...	...	17°7	19°5	15°8	14°5	15°7	13°2	81°7	93°8	72°5	27
Mar.	30	Suka Sālē	...	...	17°7	18°8	25°6	14°5	15°	13°4	81°8	88°2	76°1	22
Mar.	30	Sukūn Sālē	...	...	17°6	19°	15°	14°4	15°4	13°6	82°2	50°	73°9	21

TABLE A.

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TABLE B.

STATURE AND NASAL INDEX.

—	No.	Caste or Tribe.	Stature cm.			Nasal Index.		
			Av.	Max.	Min.	Av.	Max.	Min.
M.	40	Nayar ... ..	165·2	179·	152·2	71·1	78·7	54·4
C.	50	Hebbiar Brahman ... ..	163·2	174·4	150·8	71·2	87·2	55·4
C.	60	Karnataka Smarta Brahman ... ..	164·2	176·	150·6	71·5	91·5	61·1
C.	50	Diyaṇe Muhammadan ... ..	166·4	181·8	150·	71·5	82·6	59·3
Mar.	60	Mādiva Brahman ... ..	163·3	176·2	151·8	72·	93·2	58·8
Tu.	40	Bant ... ..	165·7	179·2	155·8	72·2	86·1	61·6
Tam.	40	Sheik Muhammadan ... ..	164·6	174·8	153·8	72·4	87·	60·
Tam.	29	Amḷattān ... ..	165·7	173·2	153·2	72·4	84·3	57·9

TABLE B.

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Tu.	50	Billava	...	...	...	163°2	175°8	149°4	72°6	91°8	60
C.	50	Sēdan	...	...	...	163°3	177°2	153°2	72°7	91°9	59°3
C.	40	Dāsa Banajiga	...	...	...	162°3	177°8	152°	72°8	82°6	59°3
Tel.	49	Kāpu	...	...	...	164°5	177°6	152°6	72°8	90°5	62°7
C.	50	Mandya Brāhman	...	...	...	165°7	177°8	150°6	73°	97°8	58°4
C.	50	Vakkaliga, Mysore	...	...	...	167°2	181°	155°2	73°	85°	62°3
Tam.	40	Vellālā	...	...	...	162°4	172°8	153°2	73°1	91°5	60°8
Tel.	30	Padma Sālē	...	...	...	159°9	171°4	153°8	73°2	83°7	61°5
C.	40	Oḱkillyān	...	...	...	166°	179°6	154°6	73°5	90°7	63°5
C.	50	Kuruba, Mysore	...	...	...	163°6	174°2	152°	73°5	88°4	64°
Mar.	30	Rangāri	...	...	...	161°3	168°4	154°4	73°6	84°1	63°5
Tam.	42	Idaiyan	...	...	...	164°3	178°	154°6	73°6	91°	62°7
Tel.	25	K. matī, Sandūr	...	...	...	162°5	169°1	153°4	74°1	88°9	62°5
C.	30	Linga Banajiga	...	...	...	163°4	171°2	154°	74°1	85°7	60°4
Tel.	60	Gūlā	...	...	...	163°8	175°8	151°	74°1	83°	61°5

TABLE B.

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Tel.	50	Telugu Banajiga	...	...	...	164°6	176°2	151°6	75°	97°7	66°
M.	40	Māppilla, Muḥammadan	...	...	...	164°8	174°4	145°	75°1	88°1	64°
C.	50	Holeya	...	...	...	162°8	175°2	151°5	75°1	88°9	64°6
...	40	Badaga, Nilgiris	...	...	...	164°1	180°2	154°	75°6	88°4	62°7
Mar.	24	Deasatha Brāhman	...	...	...	163°4	175°	151°4	75°8	87°2	66°7
Tel.	60	Bantha	...	...	...	165°7	181°	155°	75°9	100°	63°3
C.	30	Toreya	...	...	...	164°2	180°6	156°4	76°1	87°2	62°7
Tel.	30	Mala	...	...	...	165°9	175°	153°8	76°2	93°2	67°3
Tam.	40	Pathān Muḥammadan	...	...	...	164°4	177°6	155°6	76°2	83°1	71°1
Tam.	25	Pattar Brāhman	...	...	...	164°3	175°	153°4	76°5	95°3	64°7
...	25	Kota, Nilgiris	...	...	...	162°9	174°2	155°	77°2	92°9	64°
Tam.	40	Palli	...	...	...	162°5	171°6	149°8	77°3	90°5	68°3
Tam.	40	Kammalan	...	...	...	159°7	171°8	146°4	77°3	90°9	65°3
Tel.	40	Oddē	...	...	...	164°4	172°4	155°	77°3	93°	65°4
C.	40	Bēdar, Hospet	...	...	...	165°4	176°6	156°	77°5	93°	78°1

TABLE B.

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TABLE B—continued

—	No.	Caste or Tribe.	Stature cm.			Nasal Index.		
			Av.	Max.	Min.	Av.	Max.	Min.
M.	40	Tiyan ... ..	164·2	171·6	155·2	72·2	85·7	61·5
Tam.	40	Agamudaiyan ... ..	165·8	175·6	153·6	74·2	88·9	73·8
Tel.	39	Tōta Bālija ... ..	163·9	176·8	149·6	74·4	83	65·4
C.	25	Linga Banajiga, Sandūr ... ..	165·6	173	157·8	74·6	86·4	61·5
Mar.	30	Sukūn Sālē ... ..	160·3	167·6	152·5	74·8	84·4	61·5
Mar.	30	Suka Sālē ... ..	161·1	170	147·8	74·8	86·1	62·3
C.	50	Panchāla ... ..	162·3	172·2	151·6	74·8	88·9	62
C.	50	Kuruba, Hospet ... ..	162·7	175·4	162·2	74·9	92·2	75·8
...	82	Toda, Nilgiris ... ..	169·8	186·8	157·6	74·9	89·1	61·2
C.	50	Bōya ... ..	160·8	171·6	151·9	75	86	66

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TABLE B.

TABLE B—continued.

—	No.	Caste or Tribe	Stature cm.			Nasal Index.					
			Av.	Max.	Min.	Av.	Max.	Min.			
Tel.	40	Madiga, Hospet	...	...	...	162°9	173°4	152°2	77°5	90°1	66°7
Tel.	30	Togata	...	...	...	160°5	168°9	151°4	77°5	93°9	68°8
Tam.	50	Malaiyāl	...	...	...	161°9	171°2	153°2	77°8	100°	63°8
Tel.	25	Kōmati, Adoni	...	...	...	161°	168°3	153°2	77°8	100°	65°3
Tam.	40	Palli	...	...	...	162°5	169°4	151°	77°9	95°1	60°8
M.	25	Cheruman	...	...	...	157°5	166°4	145°8	78°1	88°9	69°6
Tam.	50	Chakkiliyan	...	...	...	162°2	172°5	150°3	78°0	97°6	64°
M.	24	Pulayan	...	...	...	153°	162°6	143°4	79°3	92°7	68°
C.	25	Bēdar, Adoni	...	...	...	165°4	176°2	156°5	79°4	91°	65°2
Tam.	40	Paraiyan	...	...	...	162°1	171°4	149°4	80°	91°8	66°

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TABLE B.

TABLE B.

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J.	57	Uṭali	...	...	...	159°5	171°6	147°8	80°1	97°7	66°7
Tam.	49	Iṭṭa	...	...	...	159°9	166°8	150°2	80°4	90°5	79°
Tel.	30	Mādiga, Adoni	...	...	...	163°1	173°2	154°2	80°8	102°6	69°4
M.	40	Mokkurān	...	...	...	165°1	177°8	150°8	81°	104°8	62°5
M.	18	Kānikar	...	...	...	158°7	170°4	148°	81°2	90°5	70°8
Tam.	50	Pallān	...	...	...	164°3	177°6	151°5	81°5	100°	68°8
J.	40	Chenchu	...	...	...	162°5	175°	148°	81°9	95°7	68°1
J.	26	Pulayan	...	...	...	150°5	158°4	143°1	82°9	100°2	70°8
J.	20	Kānikar	...	...	...	155°2	170°3	150°2	84°6	105°	72°3
J.	25	Mala Vōḍan	...	...	...	154°2	163°8	140°8	84°9	102°6	71°1
J.	25	Iṭṭa	...	...	...	159°8	168°	152°	84°9	100°	72°3
J.	20	Shōlaga	...	...	...	159°3	170°4	151°2	85°1	107°7	72°8
J.	22	Kurumba	...	...	...	158°	167°	149°6	86°1	111°1	70°8
J.	23	Malasar	...	...	...	161°2	170°5	152°8	87°2	102°4	75°4
J.	23	Kādir	...	...	...	157°7	169°4	148°6	87°8	115°4	72°9
J.	25	Paniyan	...	...	...	157°4	171°6	152°	95°1	108°6	72°9







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## CASTES AND TRIBES OF SOUTHERN INDIA



**ABHISHEKA.**—Abhisheka Pandarams are those who are made to pass through some ceremonies in connection with Saiva Agama.

**Acchu Tali.**—A sub-division of Vaniyan. The name refers to the peculiar tali (marriage badge) worn by married women.

**Acchuvaru.**—Recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as "Oriya-speaking carriers of grain, etc., on pack bullocks. Treated as a sub-division of Gaudo." The Acchuvarus are not Oriya people, but are attached to the Devanga weavers, and receive their name from the fact that they do **acchupani**, i.e., thread the long comb-like structures of the hand-loom. They correspond to the Jatipillais of the Kaikolan weavers, who do acchuvelai.

**Acchu Vellala.**— name assumed by some Pattanavans.

**Achan.**—Achan, meaning father or lord, was



returned, at the Cochin census, 1901, as a title of Nayars. According to Mr. Wiigram\* it is used as a title of the following : —

1. Males in the Royal Family of Palghat.
2. The minister of the Calicut Raja, known as Mangat Achan.
3. The minister of the Cochin Raja, known as Paliyat Achan.
4. The minister of the second Raja of Calicut, known as Chenli Achan.

\* Malabar Law and Custom,

**Acharapakam Chetti.**—One of the subdivisions of the Chettis, generally grouped among the Beri Chettis (g.v.)

**Achari.**—See Asari.

**Adapadava** (man of the wallet).—A name, referring to the dressing-bag which barbers carry, applied to Linqayat barbers in South Canara.

**Adapapa.**—Returned in the Madras Census



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Report, 1901, as a sub-caste of Baliya. The name is applied to female attendants on the ladies of the families of Zamindars, who, as they are not allowed to marry, lead a life of prostitution. Their sons call themselves Baliyas (see Khasa).

**Adavi** (forest or jungle).—The name of a subdivision of Yanadis, and also of a section of Gollas in Mysore.\*

**Adaviyar**.—Adaviyar or Ataviyar is the name of a class of Tamil-speaking weavers found in the Tanjore and Tinnevely districts.

**Addaku** (*Bauhinia racemosa*).—A sept of Jatapu. The leaves of this tree are largely used as food platters, in Madras, and generally on the east coast.

**Addapu Singa**.—Mendicants who beg only from Mangalas in the Telugu country.

**Adhigari**.—Defined by Mr. Wigram\* as the head of the amsam or parish in Malabar, corresponding to the Manigar (village munsiff) in





east coast districts and Patel in South Canara. The title Adhigari (one in power) is assumed by some Agamudaiyans, and Adhikari occurs as an exogamous sept of the Badagas, and the title of village headman among some Oriya castes. In South Canara, it is a sept of Stanika.

**Adi** (primitive or original).—The name of a division of Linga Baliyas, and of Velamas who have abandoned the practice of keeping their females gosha (in seclusion). It is also applied by the Chenchus to the original members of their tribe, from whom the man-lion Narasimha obtained his bride **Chenchita**.

**Adichchan**.— A sub-division of Nayar.

**Adikal** (slaves or servants).—Included among the Ambalavasis. It is recorded, in the Travancore Census Report, 1901, that "tradition states that Sankaracharya, to test the fidelity of certain Brahmins to the established ordinances of caste, went to a liquor-shop, and drank some stimulants. Not recognising that the obligations, from which adepts like Sankara were free, were



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none the less binding on the proletariat, the Brahmins that accompanied the sage made this an excuse for their drinking too.

Sankara is said to have then entered a foundry, and swallowed a cup of molten metal, and handed another to the Brahmins, who had apparently made up their minds to do all that may be done by the Acharya. But they begged to differ, apologised to him as Atiyals or humble servants, and accepted social degradation in expiation of their sinful presumption. They are now the priests in temples dedicated to **Bhadrakali**, and other goddesses who receive offerings of liquor.

They practise sorcery, and aid in the exorcising of spirits. They have the **upanayana-samskara**, and wear the sacred thread. The **simantam** ceremony is not performed. They are to repeat the Gayatri (hymn) ten times, and observe eleven days' death pollution. Their own caste-men act as priests.

The **Atiyammamar** wear the same jewellery



as the Nambutiri women, but they do not screen themselves by a cadjan (palm leaf) umbrella when they go out in public, nor are they accompanied by a Nayar maid."

**Adimittam.**—An occupational sub-division of Marans, who clean the court-yards of temples in Travancore.

**Adisaivar.**—Recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as "a sub-caste of Vellala. They are singers of Devara hymns in Saiva temples." The name indicates those who have been Saivites from the beginning, as opposed to recent Saivites. Adisaivas are Saivites, who have survived the absorbing influence of the Lingayat sect. Saivites who profess the Lingayat doctrines are known as Virasaivas. Some Pandarams, who belong to the Sozhia sub-division of the Vellalas, regularly recite Tamil verses from **Thevaram** and Tiruvachagam in Saivite temples. This being their profession, they are also called **Oduvar** (readers or reciters).





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**Aditya Varada.**—Kurubas, who worship their God on Sunday.

**Adiyan.**—Adiyan (adi, foot) has been defined\* as meaning literally " a slave, but usually applied to the vassals of Tamburans and other powerful patrons. Each Adiyan had to acknowledge his vassalage by paying annually a **nuzur** (gift of money) to his patron, and was supposed also to be ready to render service whenever needed. This yearly nuzur, which did not generally exceed one or two fanams, was called **adima panam**" (slave money), adima meaning feudal dependency on a patron.

\* Wigram, Malabar Law and Custom.

**Adiyodi.**—Adiyodi or Atiyoti, meaning slave or vassal, has been returned at times of census as a subdivision of Samantan. It is, Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,\* " the caste of the Kadattanad Rajah in North Malabar. The tradition is that, when he was driven out of his territories in and around Calicut by the Zamorin, he took shelter





under the Rajah of Chirakkal, who gave him the Kadattanad country to hold as his vassal. Some Atiyotis advance no pretension to be above Nayars in rank."

\* Madras Census Report, 1891.

**Adutton** (a bystander).—A synonym for **Kavutiyan**, a caste of Malayalam barbers. In like manner, the name **Ambattan** for Tamil barbers is said to be derived from the Sanskrit **amba** (near), **s'tha** (to stand), indicating that they stand near to shave their clients or treat their patients.

**Agamudaiyan**.—The Agamudaiyans, Mr, W. Francis writes, \* are "a cultivating caste found in all the Tamil districts. In Chingleput, North Arcot, Salem, Coimbatore and Trichinopoly, they are much less numerous than they were thirty years ago. The reason probably is that they have risen in the social scale, and have returned themselves as Vellalas. Within the same period, their strength has nearly doubled



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in Tanjore, perhaps owing to the assumption of the name by other castes like the Maravans and Kilians. In their manners and customs they closely follow the Vellalas. Many of these in the Madura district are the domestic servants of the Marava Zamindars."

\* Madras Census Report, 1901.

The Agamudaiyans who have settled in the North Arcot district are described\* by Mr. H. A. Stuart as "a class of cultivators differing widely from the Agamudaiyans of the Madura district. The former are closely allied to the Vellalas, while the latter are usually regarded as a more civilised section of the southern Maravans. It may be possible that the Agamudaiyans of North Arcot are the descendants of the first immigrants from the Madura district, who, after long settlement in the north, severed all connexions with their southern brethren."

\* Manual of the North Arcot district.



In some districts, Agamudaiyan occurs as a synonym of Vellalas, Pallis and Melakkarans, who consider that Agamudaiyan is a better caste name than their own.

The Agamudaiyans proper are found in the Tanjore, Madura, and Tinnevelly districts. It is noted in the Tanjore Manual that Ahamudaiyar (the equivalent of Agamudaiyan) is “derived from the root **aham**, which, in Tamil, has many significations. In one of these, it means a house, in another earth, and hence it has two meanings, householder and landholder; the suffix **Udeiyar** indicating ownership. The word is also used in another form, **ahambadiyan**, derived from another meaning of the same root, i.e., inside. And, in this derivation, it signifies a particular caste, whose office it was to attend to the business in the interior of the king's palace, or in the pagoda."

" The name," Mr. J. H. Nelson writes, \* " is said by the Rev. G. U. Pope, in his edition of the Abbe Dubois' work,\*\* to be derived from aham,





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a temple, and **padi**, a step, and to have been given to them in consequence of their serving about the steps of temples. But, independently of the fact that Madura pagodas are not approached by flights of steps, this seems to be a very far-fetched and improbable derivation of the word. I am inclined to doubt whether it be not merely a vulgar corruption of the well-known word **Ahamudeiyan**, possessor of a house, the title which Tamil Brahmans often use in speaking of a man to his wife, in order to avoid the unpolite term *husband*. Or, perhaps, the name comes from aham in the sense of earth, and pati, master or possessor."

\* Manual of the Madura district.

\*\* Description of the Character, Manners and Customs of the People of India.

Concerning the connection which exists between the Maravans, Kalias, and Agamudaiyans (see Kalian), the following is one version of a legend, which is narrated. The





father of **Ahalya** decided to give her in marriage to one who remained submerged under water for a thousand years. **Indra** only managed to remain thus for five hundred years, but **Gautama** succeeded in remaining for the whole of the stipulated period, and became the husband of Ahalya. Indra determined to have intercourse with her, and, assuming the guise of a cock, went at midnight to the abode of Gautama, and crowed. Gautama, thinking that daybreak was arriving, got up, and went to a river to bathe. While he was away, Indra assumed his form, and accomplished his desire. Ahalya is said to have recognised the deception after two children, who became the ancestors of the Maravans and Kilians, were born to her. A third child was born later on, from whom the Agamudaiyans are descended.

According to another version of the legend, the first-born child is said to have faced Gautama without fear, and Agamudaiyan is accordingly derived from aham or agam, pride,



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and **udaiyan**, possessor.

There is a Tamil proverb to the effect that a Kalian may come to be a Maravan.

By respectability he may develop into an Agamudaiyan, and, by slow degrees, become a Vellala, from which he may rise to be a Mudaliar. Of the three castes. Kalian, Maravan and Agamudaiyan, the last are said to have "alone been greatly influenced by contact with Brahmanism. They engage Brahman priests, and perform their birth, marriage, and death ceremonies like the Vellalas." \* I am told that the more prosperous Agamudaiyans in the south imitate the Vellalas in their ceremonial observances, and the poorer classes the Maravans.

\* Madras Census Report, 1891.

Agamudaiyan has been returned, at times of census, as a sub-division of Maravan and Kalian. In some places, the Agamudaiyans style themselves sons of Sembunattu Maravans. At



Ramnad, in the Madura district, they carry the fire-pot to the burning ground at the funeral of a Maravan, and also bring the water for washing the corpse. In the Tanjore district the Agamudaiyans are called Terkittiyar, or southerners, a name which is also applied to Kilians, Maravans, and Valaiyans. The ordinary title of the Agamudaiyans is Servaikkaran, but many of them call themselves, like the Vellalas, Pillai. Other titles, returned at times of census, are Adhigari and Mudaliar.

At the census, 1891, the following were returned as the more important sub-divisions of the Agamudaiyans:—Aivali Nattan, Kottaipattu, Malainadu, Nattumangalam, Rajaboja, Rajakulam, Rajavasal, Kallan, Maravan, Tuluvan (cf. Tuluva Vellala) and Servaikkaran. The name Rajavasal denotes those who are servants of Rajas, and has been transformed into Rajavamsa, meaning those of kingly parentage. Kottaipattu means those of the fort, and the Agamudaiyans believe that the so-





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called Kottai Vellalas of the Tinnevely district are really Kottaipattu Agamudaiyans. One subdivision of the Agamudaiyans is called Sani (cow dung). Unlike the Maravans and Kilians, the Agamudaiyans have no exogamous septs, or **kilais**.

It is recorded, in the Mackenzie Manuscripts, that "among the Maravas, the kings or the rulers of districts, or principal men, are accustomed to perform the ceremony of tying on the **tali**, or in performing the marriage at once in full, with reference to females of the **Agambadiyar** tribe. The female children of such marriages can intermarry with the Maravas, but not among the Agambadiyar tribe. On the other hand, the male offspring of such marriages is considered to be of the mother's tribe, and can intermarry with the Agambadiyas, but not in the tribe of the Maravas."



I am told that, under ordinary circumstances, the offspring of a





marriage between a Maravan and Agamudaiyan becomes an Agamudaiyan, but that, if the husband is a man of position, the male issues are regarded as Maravans. Adult marriage appears to be the rule among the Agamudaiyans, but sometimes, as among the Maravans, Kilians and other castes, young boys are, in the southern districts, sometimes married to grown-up girls.

The marriage ceremonial, as carried out among the poorer Agamudaiyans, is very simple. The sister of the bridegroom proceeds to the home of the bride on an auspicious day, followed by a few females carrying a woman's cloth, a few jewels, flowers, etc. The bride is seated close to a wall, facing east. She is dressed up in the cloth which has been brought, and seated on a plank. Betel leaves, areca nuts, and flowers are presented to her by the bridegroom's sister, and she puts them in her lap. A turmeric-dyed string or garland is then placed round the bride's neck by the



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bridegroom's sister, while the conch shell (musical instrument), is blown. On the same day the bride is conducted to the home of the bridegroom, and a feast is held.

The more prosperous Agamudaiyans celebrate their marriages according to the Puranic type, which is the form in vogue amongst most of the Tamil castes, with variations. The astrologer is consulted in order to ascertain whether the pair agree in some at least of the points enumerated below.

For this purpose, the day of birth, zodiacal signs, planets and asterisms under which the pair were born, are taken into consideration : —

1. Varam (day of birth).—Days are calculated, commencing with the first day after the new moon. Counting from the day on which the girl was born, if the young man's birthday happens to be the fourth, seventh, thirteenth, sixteenth, or seventeenth, it is considered good.

2. Ganam(class or tribe).—There are three



ganams, called **Manusha**, **Deva**, and **Rakshasa**. Of the twenty-seven asterisms, Aswini, Bharani, etc., some are Manusha, some Deva, and some Rakshasa ganam. Ashtham and Swathi are considered to be of Deva ganam, so individuals born under these asterisms are regarded as belonging to Deva ganam. Those born under the asterisms Bharani, Rogni, Puram, Puradam, Uththaradam, etc., belong to the Manusha ganam. Under Rakshasa ganam are included Krithika, Ayilyam, Makam, Visakam, and other asterisms. The bridal pair should belong to the same ganam, as far as possible. Manusha and Deva is a tolerable combination, whereas Rakshasa and Deva, or Rakshasa and Manusha, are bad combinations.

3. Sthridirgam (woman's longevity).—The young man's birthday should be beyond the thirteenth day, counting from the birthday of the girl.

4. Yoni (female generative organs).—The asterisms are supposed to belong to several





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animals. An individual belongs to the animal to which the asterism under which he was born belongs. For example, a man is a horse if his asterism is Aswini, a cow if his asterism is Uththirattadhi, and so on. The animals of husband and wife must be on friendly terms, and not enemies. The elephant and man, horse and cow, dog and monkey, cat and mouse, are enemies. The animals of man and wife should not both be males. Nor should the man be a female, or the wife a male animal.

5. Rasi (zodiacal sign).—Beginning from the girl's zodiacal sign, the young man's should be beyond the sixth.

6. Rasyathipathi (planet in the zodiacal sign).—The ruling planets of the zodiacal signs of the pair should not be enemies.

7. Vasyam.—The zodiacal signs of the pair should be compatible, e.g., Midunam and Kanni, Singam and Makaram, Dhanus and Minam, Thulam and Makaram, etc.





8. Rajju (string).—The twenty-seven asterisms are arranged at various points on four parallel lines drawn across three triangles. These lines are called the leg, thigh, abdomen, and neck rajjus. The vertices of the triangles are the head rajjus. The asterisms of the pair should not be on the same rajju, and it is considered to be specially bad if they are both on the neck.

9. Vriksham(tree),—The asterisms belong to a number of trees, e.g. : — Aswini, *Sirychnos* *Nux-vomica*.

Bharani, *Phyllanihus Emblica*.

Krithikai, *Ficus glomerata*.

Puram, *Butea frondosa*.

Hastham, *Sesbania grandiflora*.

Thiruvonam, *Calotropis gigantea*.

Uththirattadhi, *Melia Azadirachta*.

Some of the trees are classed as milky, and others as dry. The young man's tree should be dry, and that of the girl milky, or both milky.

10. Pakshi (birds).—Certain asterisms also



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belong to birds, and the birds of the pair should be on friendly terms, e.g., peacock and fowl.

11. *Jadi* (caste).—The zodiacal signs are grouped into castes as follows : —

Brahman, *Karkatakam*, *Minum*, and *Dhanus*.

*Kshatriya*, *Mesham*, *Vrischikam*.

*Vaisya*, *Kumbam*, *Thulam*.

*Sudra*, *Rishabam*, *Makaram*.

Lower castes, *Midhunam*, *Singam*, and *Kanni*.

The young man should be of a higher caste, according to the zodiacal signs, than the girl.

After ascertaining the agreement of the pair, some close relations of the young man proceed to some distance northward, and wait for omens. If the omens are auspicious, they are satisfied. Some, instead of so going, go to a temple, and seek the omens either by placing flowers on the idol, and watching the direction in which they fall, or by picking up a flower from a large number strewn in front of the idol. If the



flower picked up, and the one thought of, are of the same colour, it is regarded as a good omen.

The betrothal ceremony is an important event. As soon as the people have assembled, the bridegroom's party place in their midst the **pariyam** cloth and jewels. Some responsible person inspects them, and, on his pronouncing that they are correct, permission is given to draw up the **lagna patrika** (letter of invitation, containing the date of marriage, etc.).

Vigneswara (the elephant god Ganesa) is then worshipped, with the lagna patrika in front of him. This is followed by the announcement of the forthcoming marriage by the purohit (priest), and the settlement of the amount of the pariyam (bride's money). For the marriage celebration, a pandal (booth) is erected, and a dais, constructed of clay and laterite earth, is set up inside it.

From the day on which the pandal is erected until the wedding day, the contracting couple have to go through the **nalagu** ceremony





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separately or together. This consists in having their bodies smeared with turmeric paste (*Phascolus Mungo* paste), and gingelly (Sesamum) oil.

On the wedding day, the bridegroom, after a clean shave, proceeds to the house of the bride. The finger and toenails of the bride are cut. The pair offer **pongal** (boiled rice) to the family deity and their ancestors. A square space is cleared in the centre of the dais for the sacred fire (*homam*). A many-branched lamp, representing the thousand-eyed Indra, is placed to the east of the square.

The purohit, who is regarded as equivalent to Yama (the god of death), and a pot with a lamp on it representing Agni devata, occupy the south-east corner. Women representing **Niruti** (a devata) are posted in the southwest corner. The direction of **Varuna** (the god of water) being west, the bridegroom occupies this position. The best man, who represents **Vayu** (the god of wind) is placed in the north-west





corner. As the position of **Kubera** (the god of wealth) is the north, a person, with a bag full of money, is seated on that side. A grinding-stone and roller, representing Siva and Sakthi, are placed in the north-east corner, and, at their side, pans containing nine kinds of seedlings, are set. Seven pots are arranged in a row between the grinding-stone and the branched lamp. Some married women bring water from seven streams or seven different places, and pour it into a pot in front of the lamp.

The milk-post (**pal kambam**) is set up between the lamp and the row of pots. This post is usually made of twigs of (*Ficus religiosa*, *Fiats bengalensis*, and *Erythrina indica*, tied together and representing - **Brahma**, **Vishnu**, and **Siva**. Sometimes, however, twigs of **Odina Wodier**, and green bamboo sticks, are substituted.

At the close of the marriage ceremonies, the *Erythrina* or *Odina* twig is planted, and it is regarded as a good sign if it takes root and



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grows.

The sacred fire is kindled, and the bridegroom goes through the **upanayana** (thread investiture) and other ceremonies. He then goes away from the house in procession (**paradesa pravesam**), and is met by the bride's father, who brings him back to the pandal. The bride's father and mother then wash his feet, and rings are put on his toes (**kalkattu**, or tying the leg). The purohit gives the bridegroom a thread (**kankanam**), and, after washing the feet of the bride's father and mother, ties it on his wrist. A thread is also tied on the left wrist of the bride.

The pair being seated in front of the sacred fire, a ceremony called **Nandisradham** (memorial service to ancestors) is performed, and new clothes are given to the pair. The next item is the tying of the **tali** (marriage badge). The tali is usually tied on a turmeric-dyed thread, placed on a cocoanut, and taken round to be blessed by all present. Then the purohit gives the tali to the bridegroom, and he ties it on



the bride's neck amidst silence, except for the music played by the barber or **Melakkaran** musicians. While the *tali* is being tied, the bridegroom's sister stands behind the bride, holding a lamp in her hand. The bridegroom ties one knot, and his sister ties two knots. After the tali-tying, small plates of gold or silver, called **pattam**, are tied on the foreheads of the pair, and presents of money and cloths are made to them by their relations and friends. They then go seven times round the pandal, and, at the end of the seventh round, they stand close to the grinding-stone, on which the bridegroom places the bride's left foot.

They take their seats on the dais, and the bridegroom, taking- some parched rice (pori) from the bride's brother, puts it in the sacred fire. Garlands of flowers are given to the bride and bridegroom, who put them on, and exchange them three or five times. They then roll flowers made into a ball. This is followed by the waving of **arathi** (coloured water), and





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circumambulation of the pandal by the pair, along with the **ashtamangalam** or eight auspicious things, viz., the bridesmaid, best man, lamp, vessel filled with water, mirror, **ankusam** (elephant goad), white **chamara** (yak's tail fly-flapper), flag and drum.

Generally the pair go three times round the pandal, and, during the first turn, a cocoanut is broken near the grinding-stone, and the bride is told that it is Siva, and the roller Sakthi, the two combined being emblematical of **Ardanarisvara**, a bisexual representation of Siva and Parvathi.

During the second round, the story of **Arundati** is repeated to the bride. Arundati was the wife of the **Rishi Vasishta**, and is looked up to as a model of conjugal fidelity. The morning star is supposed to be Arundati, and the purohit generally points it out to the bridal pair at the close of the ceremonial, which terminates with three homams. The wedding may be concluded in a single day, or last for two or three days.

The dead are either buried or cremated. The





corpse is carried to the burning or burial-ground on a bier or palanquin. As the Agamudaiyans are Saivites, Pandarams assist at the funeral ceremonies. On the second or third day after death, the son and others go to the spot where the corpse was buried or burnt, and offer food, etc., to the deceased. A pot of water is left at the spot. Those who are particular about performing the death ceremonies on an elaborate scale offer cooked food to the soul of dead person until the fifteenth day, and carry out the final death ceremonies (**karmandhiram**) on the sixteenth day. Presents are then given to Brahmans, and, after the death pollution has been removed by sprinkling with holy water (**punyaham**), a feast is given to the relatives.

The Agamudaiyans worship various minor deities, such as Aiyandar, Pidari, and Karupannaswami.

**Agaru.**—Agaru, or Avaru, is recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as a small caste of Telugu cultivators in Vizagapatam and



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Ganjam, who are also sellers of vegetables and betel leaves. Agarar is said to mean betel in their language, which they call **Bhasha**, and contains a good deal of Oriya. An extensive colony of Agarar is settled at Nellimerla near Vizianagram. Both males and females engage in the cultivation of the betel vine, and different kinds of greens, which find a ready sale in the Vizianagram market. Marriage is usually after puberty, and an Oriya Brahman officiates. The dead are burnt.

**Agarwal.**—A few members of this Upper India trading caste, who deal in grain and jewellery, and are also bankers and usurers, have been returned at times of census.

**Agasa.**—In the South Canara district, there are three distinct classes of washermen, viz., (i) Konkani Christians ; (2) Canarcse-speaking washermen, who seem to be allied to the Agasas of Mysore ; (3) Tulu-speaking washermen. The Tulu-speaking Agasas follow the **aliya santana** law of inheritance (in the



female line). **Madivala** (madi, a clean cloth) is a synonym for Agasa. The word Agasa is derived from agasi, a turban.

The Agasas of Mysore have been described as follows.\* "The Agasa is a member of the village hierarchy, his office being hereditary, and his remuneration being grain fees from the ryots. Besides washing, he occasionally ekes out his substance by carrying on his donkeys grain from place to place. He is also employed in bearing the torch in marriage and other public ceremonies. The principal object of worship is the pot of boiling water (**ubbe**), in which dirty clothes are steeped. Animals are sacrificed to the god with the view of preventing the clothes being burnt in the ubbe pot.

Under the name of **Bhuma Deva**, there are temples dedicated to this god in some large towns, the service being conducted by pujaris (priests) of the Agasa caste. The Agasas are Vishnuvaits, and pray to Vishnu, Pattalamma, and the Saktis. Their gurus (religious





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preceptors) are Satanis. A unique custom is attached to the washerman's office. When a girl-wife attains puberty, it is the duty and privilege of the washerman to carry the news, accompanied by certain presents, to her husband's parents, for which the messenger is duly rewarded."

The Tulu Madivalas of the South Canara district, like other Tulu castes, have exogamous septs or **balis**. They will wash clothes for all castes above the **Billavas**. They also supply cloths for decorating the marriage booth and funeral cars, and carry torches. They worship **bhuthas** (devils), of whom the principal one seems to be **Jumadi**.

At the time of **kolas** (*bhutha festivals*), the Madivalas have the right to cut off the heads of the fowls or goats, which are sacrificed. The animals are held by **Pombadas** or **Paravas**, and the Madivala decapitates them. On the seventh day after the birth of a child, the washerwoman ties a thread round its waist. For purificatory





ceremonies, the Madivali should give washed clothes to those under pollution.

In their ceremonial observances, the Madivalas closely follow the Bants. In some places, they have a headman called, as among the Bants, Gurikara or Guttinaya. At marriages, the pouring of the **dhare** water over the united hands of the bride and bridegroom is the duty of the father or maternal uncle of the bride, not of the headman.

Some Maratha washermen call themselves Dandu (army) Agasa.

The insigne of the washermen at Conjeeveram is a pot, such as that in which clothes are boiled.

**Agastya** (the name of a sage).—An exogamous sept of Kondaiyamkottai Maravans.

Agni (fire).—An exogamous sept of the Kurubas and Gollas, and sub-division of the Pallis or Vanniyans. The equivalent Aggi occurs as an exogamous sept of Boya. The Pallis claim



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to be Agnikula Kshatriyas, i.e., to belong to the fire race of Kshatriyas.

**Agraharekala.**—A sub-division of **Bhatrazu**, meaning those who belong to the **agraharam**, or Brahman quarter of a village.

**Ahir.**—A few members of this Upper India caste of cowherds have been returned at times of census.

**Ahmedi.**—Returned, at times of census, as a general name for Muhammadans.

**Aivattukuladavaru** (people of fifty families).— A synonym for Bakuda.

**Aiya.**—Aiya or Ayya, meaning father, is the title of many classes, which include Dasari, Devanga, Golla, Idiga, Jangam, Konda Dora, Komati, Koppala Velama, Linga Baliya, Mangala, Muka Dora, Paidi, Satani, Servegara, and Tambala. It is further a title of the Patnulkarans, who claim to be Brahmans, and a sub-division of the Tamil Pallans.

Aiyar occurs very widely as a title among



Tamil Brahmans, and is replaced in the Telugu and Canarese countries by Bhatlu, Pantulu, and Sastrulu. It is noted by the Rev. A. Margoschis that "the honorific title Aiyar was formerly used exclusively by Brahmans, **but has now come to be used by every native clergyman**. The name which precedes the title will enable us to discover whether the man is Christian or Hindu. Thus Yesudian Aiyar means the Aiyar who is the servant of Jesus." The Rev. G. U. Pope, the well-known Tamil scholar, was known as Pope Aiyar.

**Aiyanar.**—A sub-division of Kalian, named after Aiyanar, the only male deity among the Grama Devata or village deities.

**Aiyarakulu.**—In the Madras Census Report, 1901, Aiyarakam is summed up as being a caste of Telugu cultivators, who, in their social and religious observances, closely follow the Kapus and Balijas, may intermarry with Telagas, and will accept drinking water from the hands of Gollas. According to Mr. C.





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Hayavadana Rao, to whom I am indebted for the following note, the Aiyarakulu are a section of Kapus, who rose in the social scale by Royal favour. The name is derived from **aiya** and **rikam**, denoting the act of being an aiya or distinguished person. The Aiyarakulu state that their forefathers were soldiers in the Vizianagram army, and rendered great services to the Rajas.

They have a story to the effect that, on one occasion, they proceeded on an expedition against a Golconda force, and gave so much trouble to the Muhammadan commander thereof that, after putting them to the sword, he proceeded to their own country, to destroy their homes. On hearing of this, the women, dressing themselves in male attire, advanced with bayonets and battle-axes against the Muhammadans, and drove them off in great disorder.

The Raja, in return for their gallant conduct, adorned their legs with silver bangles, such as





the women still wear at the present day.

The Aiyarakulu are divided into gotras, such as **naga** (cobra), **tabelu** (tortoise), etc., which are strictly totemistic, and are further divided into exogamous septs or intiperulu. The custom of **menarikam**, according to which a man should marry his maternal uncle's daughter, is in force.

Girls are married before puberty, and a Brahman officiates at the wedding rites, during which the bride and bridegroom wear silver sacred threads, which are subsequently converted into rings. Some Aiyarakulu call themselves **Razus**, and wear the sacred thread, but interdine and intermarry with other members of the community. The remarriage of widows, and divorce are forbidden.

The principal occupation of the Aiyarakulus is cultivating, but, in some parts, many of them are cart-drivers plying between the plains of Vizagapatam and the Agency tracts. The usual title of members of the caste is Patrudu.



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**Akasam** (sky).—An exogamous sept of Devanga.

**Akattu Charna**.—A sub-division of Nayar.

**Akattulavar**.—A name, indicating those inside (in seclusion or gosha), by which Nambutiri and Elayad and other females are called.

**Akshantala** (rice grain).—A gotra of Odde. Akshathayya is the name of a gotra of Gollas, who avoid rice coloured with turmeric and other materials.

**Akula** (betel leaf: Piper Belle).—An exogamous sept of Kamma and Bonthuk Savara, and a sub-division of Kapu. The presentation of betel leaves and areca nuts, called pan-supari, as a complimentary offering is a wide-spread Indian custom.

**Ala**.—A sub-division of **Golla**.

**Alagi** (pot).—An exogamous sept of Vakkaliga.

**Alavan**.—The Alavans are summed up, in the



Madras Census Report, 1901, as "workers in salt-pans, who are found only in Madura and Tinnevely. Their titles are Pannaiyan and Muppan. They are not allowed to enter Hindu temples." In the Travancore Census Report, 1901, it is recorded that "the Alavans or Uppalavans (salt Alavans) are so called because they work in alams or salt-pans.

Three or four centuries ago, seven families of them are said to have been brought over from the Pandyan territory to Travancore, to work in the salt-pans. It is said that there are at Tamarakkulam, Puttalam, and other places in South Travancore, inscriptions recording their immigration, but these have not been deciphered. They speak Tamil. They are flesh-eaters. Drinking is rare among them. Burial was the rule in ancient days, but now the dead are sometimes burned. Tattooing is a general custom. The tutelary deities are **Sasta** and **Bhadrakali**. As a class the Alavans are very industrious. There are no better salt labourers in





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all Southern India."

**Albino.**—The picture drawn by the Abbe Dubois \* of albino Natives is not a pleasant one. "This extreme fairness," he says, "is unnatural, and makes them very repulsive to look at. In fact, these unfortunate beings are objects of horror to every one, and even their parents desert them. They are looked upon as lepers. They are called **Kakrelaks** as a term of reproach. Kakrelaks are horrible insects, disgustingly dirty, which give forth a loathsome odour, and shun the day and its light.

\* Hindu Manners and Customs. Ed. 1897.

The question has been raised as to whether these degenerate individuals can produce children like themselves, and afflicted with **nyctalopia**. Such a child has never come under my observation ; but I once baptised the child of a female Kakrelak, who owed its birth to a rash European soldier. These unfortunate wretches are denied decent burial after death, and are cast into ditches."





This reference to albinos by the observant Abbe may be amplified by the notes taken on several albino Natives in Madras and Mysore, which show, *inter alia*, that the lot of the present day albino is not an unhappy one.

Chinna Abboye, æt. 35. Shepherd caste. Rope (insigne of office) round waist for driving cattle, and tying the legs of cows when milking them. Yellowish-white hair where long, as in the kudumi. Bristles on top of shaved head pure white. Greenish-brown iris. Father dark ; mother, like himself, has white hair and pink skin. One brother an albino, married. One child of the usual Native type. Cannot see well in glare of sunlight, but sees better towards sunset. Screws his eyelids into transverse slits. Mother kind to him.

Vembu Achari, æt. 20. Artist. Kudumi (top-knot) yellowish-white. White eyebrows and moustache. Bright pink lips, and pink complexion. Iris light blue with pink radiating striae and pink peripheral zone. Sees best in



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the evening when the sun is low on the horizon. Screws up his eyelids to act as a diaphragm. Mother, father, brothers and sisters, all of the ordinary Native type. No relations albino, as far as he knows. Engaged to be nuirricd. People like himself are called **chevapu** (red-coloured), or, in derision, **vellakaran** (European or white man). Children sometimes make game of him, but people generally are kind to him.

Moonoosawmy, æt. 45. Belongs to the weaver class, and is a well-to-do man. Albino. Had an albino sister, and a brother of the ordinary type. Is the father often children, of whom five are albinos. They are on terms of equality with the other members of their community, and one daughter is likely to be married to the son of a prosperous man.

....., æt. 22. Fisherman caste. Albino. His maternal uncle had an albino daughter. Has four brothers, of whom two are albinos. Cannot stand the glare of the sun, and is consequently unable to do outdoor work. Moves freely among



the members of his community, and could easily secure a wife, if he was in a position to support one.

....., æt. 36. Rajput. Hardware merchant. His father, of ordinary Native type, had twelve children, five of whom were albino, by an albino wife, whose brother was also albino. Married to a woman of Native type, and had one non-albino child. His sister, of ordinary Native type, has two albino children. Iris light blue. Hair yellowish. Complexion pink. Keeps left eye closed, and looks through a slit between eyelids of right eye. People call him in *Canarese kempuava* (red man). They are kind to him.

**Alia.**—The Alias are an Oriya cultivating caste, found mainly in the Gumsur taluk of Ganjam. In the Madras Census Report, 1891, it is suggested that the name is derived from the Sanskrit **holo**, meaning a plough. The further suggestions have been made that it is derived from alo. meaning crop, or from AH, a killa or taluk of Orissa, whence the Aliyas have





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migrated. In social position the Alias rank below the Bhondaris and Odiyas, **who will not accept water touched by them.**

Various titles occur within the caste, e.g., Biswalo, Bonjo, Bariko, Jenna, Kampo, Kondwalo, Lenka, Mahanti, Molla Nahako, Patro, Podhano, Podiyali, Ravuto, Siyo, and Swayi. Like other Oriya castes, the Alias have gotras, and the marriage rules based on titles and gotras are peculiar. A Podhano man may, for example, marry a Podhano girl, if their gotras are different. Further, two people, whose gotras are the same, may marry if they have a different title. Thus, a man, whose gotra is Goru and title Podhano, may marry a girl of a family of which the gotra is Goru, but title other than Podhano.

Infant marriage is the rule, and, if a girl does not secure a husband before she reaches maturity, she goes through a mock marriage ceremony, in which the bridegroom is represented by a brass vessel or an arrow. Like





many other Oriya castes, the Aliyas follow the Chaitanya form of Vaishnavism, and also worship various Takuranis (village deities).

**Alige** (drum).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba.

**Aliya Santanam**.—Inheritance in the female line. The equivalent, in the Canara country, of the Malayali marumakkathayam.

**Allam** (ginger).—An exogamous sept of Mala.

**Allikulam** (lily clan).—Returned, at times of census, as a sub-division of **Anappan**.

**Alvar**.—An exogamous sept of Toreya. Alvar is a synonym of Garuda, the winged vehicle of Vishnu. Alvar Dasari occurs as a sub-division of Valluvans, which claims descent from Tiruppan Alvar, one of the Vaishnava saints.

**Amaravatiyavaru**.—A name, denoting people of **Amaravati** on the Kistna river, recorded \* as a subdivision of **Desabhaga Madigas**. Amaravati also occurs as a sub-



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division, or nadu, of **Vallamban**.

\* Mysore Census Report, 1901

**Ambalakkaran.**—In the Madras Census Report. 1891, Mr. H. A. Stuart writes that "Ambalakkaran (ambalam, an open place\*) is the usual designation of a head of a village in the Maravan and Kallan districts, and it is, or was the common agnomen of Kallans. I am not able to state what is the precise connection between the Ambalakkaran and Kallan castes, but, from some accounts which I have obtained, the Ambalakkarans seem to be very closely connected, if not identical with Muttiriyans (Telugu Mutracha), who have been classed as village watchmen ; and this is borne out by the subdivisions returned, for, though no less than 109,263 individuals have given Ambalakkaran as the sub-division also, yet, of the subdivisions returned, Muttiriyans and Mutracha are the strongest.



\* Ambalam is an open space or building;, where affairs connected with justice are transacted. Ambalakkaran denotes the president of an assembly, or one who proclaims the decision of those assembled in an **ambalam**.

Marriage is usually deferred until after puberty, and widow re-marriage is permitted, but there does not seem to be the same freedom of divorce at will as is found among Kallans, Maravans, etc. The dead are either burnt or buried. The consumption of flesh and liquor is allowed. Their usual agnomen is said to be Servaikkaran, but the titles Muttiriyar, Ambalakkaran, Malavarayan, Mutarasan, and Vannian are also used. The usual agnomen of Muttiriyans, on the other hand, is said to be Nayakkan (Naik)."

In the Madras Census Report, 1901, the Ambalakkarans are summed up as follows. "A Tamil caste of cultivators and village watchmen. Till recently the term Ambalakkaran was





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considered to be a title of the Kallans, but further enquiries have shown that it is the name of a distinct caste, found chiefly in the Trichinopoly district. The Ambalakkarans and Muttiriyans of a village in Musiri taluk wrote a joint petition, **protesting against their being classified as Kallans**, but nevertheless it is said that the Kallans of Madura will not eat in Ambalakkaran's houses.

“There is some connection between 'Ambalakkarans, Muttiriyans, Mutrachas, Uralis, Vedans, Valaiyans, and Vettuvans. It seems likely that all of them are descended from one common parent stock. Ambalakkarans claim to be descended from Kannappa Nayanar, one of the sixty-three Saivite saints, who was a Vedan or hunter by caste. In Tanjore the Valaiyans declare themselves to have a similar origin, and in that district Ambalakkaran and Muttiriyans seem to be synonymous with Valaiyan. [Some Valaiyans have Ambalakkaran as a title.] Moreover, the statistics of the distribution of the





Valaiyans show that they are numerous in the districts where Ambalakkarans are few, and vice versa, which looks as though certain sections of them had taken to calling themselves Ambalakkarans.

“The upper section of the Ambalakkarans style themselves Pillai, which is a title properly belonging to Vellalas, but the others are usually called **Muppan** in Tanjore, and Ambalakkaran, Muttiriyar, and Servaigaran in Trichinopoly. The headman of the caste panchayat (council) is called the **Kariyakkaran**, and **his office is hereditary in particular families**. Each headman has a peon called the Kudi-pillai, whose duty it is to summon the panchayat when necessary, and to carry messages. For this he gets an annual fee of four annas from each family of the caste in his village. The caste has certain endogamous sections. Four of them are said to be Muttiriyar or Mutracha, Kavalgar, Vanniyan, and Valaiyan.

“A member of any one of these is usually



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prohibited by the panchayats from marrying outside it on pain of excommunication. Their customs are a mixture of those peculiar to the higher castes and those followed by the lower ones. Some of them employ Brahmans as **purohits** (priests), and wear the sacred thread at funerals and **sraddhas** (memorial services for the dead). Yet they eat mutton, pork, and fowls, drink alcohol, and allow the marriage of widows and divorced women."

**Muttiriyan** and **Kavalgar** both mean watchman. Vanniyan is certainly a separate caste, some members of which take Ambalakkaran as a title. The Ambalakkarans are apparently Valaiyans, who have separated themselves from the main stock on account of their prosperity. For the following note, I am indebted to Mr. F. R. Hemingway. The Ambalakkarans or Muttiriyans are more numerous in the Trichinopoly district and Pudukkottai than in any other part of the Presidency. Though they have been treated as



separate castes, they appear to be one and the same in this district, generally calling themselves Muttiriyar in the Trichinopoly taluk, and Ambalakkaran elsewhere, and having no objection to either name. They admit they are called Valaiyans, but **repudiate any connection with the caste of that name**, and explain the **appellation** by a story that, when Siva's ring was swallowed by a fish in the Ganges, one of their ancestors invented the first net (valai) made in the world. As relics of their former greatness they point to the thousand-pillared mantapam at Srirangam, which is called **muttarasan koradu**, and a big matam at Palni, both of which, they say, were built by their kings.

To the latter every household of the caste subscribes four annas annually. They say that they were born of the sweat (**muttu**, a pearl or bead of perspiration) of Parama-siva. The caste is divided into a number of **nadus**, the names and number of which are variously given. Some of these are Ettarai, Koppu, Adavattur,





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Tirampalaiyam, Vlmanayakkanpalaiyam in the Trichinopoly taluk, and Amur, Savindippatti, and Karungali in Musiri taluk.

Widow remarriage is allowed in some of these nadus, and not in others. They use the titles Muttiriyar, Ambalakkaran, Servaikaran, and Kavalkaran. They admit their social inferiority to the Vellalans, Kallans, Nattamans, and Reddis, from all of whom they will accept meals, but consider themselves superior to Pallis, Uralis, Uppiliyans, and Valaiyans.

Their usual occupation is cultivation, but they have also taken to petty trade, and some earn a living as masons and **kavalgars** (watchmen). They wear the sacred thread during their marriages and funerals. They have panchayats for each village and for the nadu, and have also a number of the Patnattu Chettis, who are recognized as elders of the caste, and sit with the head of the nadu to decide cases of adultery, etc.

**Ambalavasi.**—This is summed up, in the





Madras Census Report, 1901, as "a generic name applied to all classes of temple servants in Malabar. There are many sub-divisions of the caste, such as Poduval, Chakkiyar, Nambiyassan, Pidaran, Pisharodi, Variyan, Nambi, Teyyambadi, etc., which are assigned different services in the Hindu temples, such as the preparation of garlands, the sweeping of the floor, the fetching of firewood, the carrying of the idols in procession, singing, dancing, and so on. Like most of the temple servant classes, they are inferior to the lower Brahmans, such as the **Mussads**, and food will not be taken from the hands of most of them even by Nayars."

In the Travancore Census Report, 1901, it is noted that "the term Ambalavasi (one who lives in a temple) is a group-name, and is applied to castes, whose occupation is temple service. The **Keralamahatmya** speaks of them as **Kshetravasinah**, which means those who live in temples. They are also known as **Antaralas**, from their occupying an intermediate position



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between the Brahmans and the Brahmanical Kshatriyas of Malabar on the one hand, and the Sudras on the other. While according to one view they are fallen Brahmans, others, such as the writer of the Keralolpatti, would put them down as an advance from the Sudras. The castes recognised as included in the generic name of Ambalavasi are:

Nambiyassan.

Pushpakan.

Puppalli.

Chakkiyar.

Brahmani or Daivampati.

Adikal.

Nambidi.

Pilappalli.

Nambiyar.

Pisharati.

Variyar.

Nattupattan.



Tiyattunni.

Kurukkal.

Poduval.

“All these castes are not connected with pagodas, nor do the Muttatus, who are mainly engaged in temple service, come under this group, strictly speaking. The *rationale* of their occupation seems to be that, in accepting duty in temples and consecrating their lives to the service of God, they hope to be absolved from the sins inherited from their fathers. In the case of ascent from lower castes, the object presumably is the acquisition of additional religious merit . . . The delinquent Brahman cannot be retained in the Brahmanic function without lowering the standard of his caste. He had, therefore, to be allotted other functions.

Temple service of various kinds, such as garland-making for the Pushpakan, Variyar and others, and popular recitation of God's works for the Chakkiyar, were found to hold an



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intermediate place between the internal functions of the Brahmans and the external functions of the other castes, in the same sense in which the temples themselves are the exoteric counterparts of an esoteric faith, and represent a position between the inner and the outer economy of nature.

Hence arose probably an intermediate status with intermediate functions for the Antaralas, the intermediates of Hindu Society. The Kshatriyas, having **commensal** privileges with the Brahmans, come next to them in the order of social precedence. In the matter of pollution periods, which seem to be in inverse ratio to the position of the caste, the Brahmans observe 10 days, the Kshatriyas 11 days, and the Sudras of Malabar (Nayars) 16 days. The Ambalavasis generally observe pollution for 12 days. In some cases, however, it is as short as 10, and in others as long as 13 and even 14, but never 16 days."

It is further recorded, in the Cochin Census





Report, 1901, that "Ambalavasis (literally temple residents) are persons who have the privilege of doing service in temples. Most of the castes have grown out of sexual relations between members of the higher and lower classes, and are therefore Anulomajas and Pratilomajas.\* They may be broadly divided into two classes, (i) those that wear the sacred thread, and (2) those that do not wear the same.

\* Anulomaja, the product of the connection of a man with a woman of a lower caste; Pratiloma, of the connection of a man with a woman of a higher caste.

Adikal, Chakkiyar, Nambiyaror Pushpakan, and Tiyyattu Nambiyar belong to the threaded class, while Chakkiyar, Nambiyar, Pisharoti, Variyar, Puthuval, and Marar are non-threaded. Though all Ambalavasis have to do service in temples, they have many of them sufficiently distinct functions to perform.

They are all governed by the marumakkathayam law of inheritance (through



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the female line) ; some castes among them, however, follow the makkathayam system (from father to son). A Nambiyar, Pisharoti, or Variyar marries under special circumstances a woman of his own caste, and brings home his wife into the family, and their issue thus become members of the father's family, with the right of inheriting the family property, and form themselves into a fresh marumakkathayam stock. In the matter of **tali-kettu** (tali-tying) marriage, and marriage by union in **sambandham** (alliance), they follow customs similar to those of Nayers.

So far as the employment of Brahman as priests, and the period of birth and death pollution are concerned, there are slight differences. The threaded classes have **Gayatri** (hymn). The purificatory ceremony after birth or death pollution is performed by Nambudris, but at all funeral ceremonies, such as pinda, sraddha, etc., their own caste men officiate as priests.



The Nambudris can take meals cooked by a Brahman in the house of any of the Ambalavasis except Marars. In fact, if the Nambudris have the right of purification, they do not then impose any restrictions in regard to this. All Ambalavasis are strict vegetarians at public feasts. The Ambalavasis sit together at short distances from one another, and take their meals. Their females unite themselves in sambandham with their own caste males, or with Brahmans or Kshatriyas. Brahmans, Kshatriyas, or Nambidhis cannot take water from them. Though a great majority of the Ambalavasis still follow their traditional occupations, many of them have entered the public service, and taken to more lucrative pursuits."

The more important sections of the Ambalavasis are dealt with in special articles.

**Ambattan.**— For the following note I am indebted to Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao. The Ambattans are the Tamil barbers, or **barber-**





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**surgeons**. The word is usually derived from the Sanskrit **amba** (near) and **s'tha** (to stand), i.e., he who stands near to shave his clients, or treat his patients. In like manner, the **Kavutiyān** caste of Malayalam barbers is called **Adutton**, signifying bystander. The Ambattan corresponds to the **Mangala** of the Telugu country, the Vilakkatalavan of Malabar, the **Kshauraka** of the Canarese Brahmans, and the **Hajam** of Muhammadans.

Not improbably the name refers to the original occupation of **medicine-man**, to which were added later the professions of village barber and musician. This view seems to receive some support from the current tradition that the Ambattans are the descendants of the offspring of a Vaisya woman by a Brahman, to whom the medical profession was allotted as a means of livelihood.

In this connection, it may be noted that the Ambattan women are the **recognised midwives of the Hindu community** in the Tamil country. It





is impossible to say how far the above tradition is based on the verse of Manu, the ancient law-giver, who says that " from a Brahmana with the daughter of a Vaisya is born a son called an Ambashtha."

In a succeeding verse, he states that as children of a Brahmana by a woman of one of the three lower castes, the Ambashthas are one of the six base-born castes or **apasada**.

He says further that Brahmans may eat of a barber's food—a permission which, it is hardly necessary to say, they do not avail themselves of. A single exception is, however, noteworthy. At the temple of Jugganath, within the temple precincts, neither the barber, nor the food which he prepares, and is partaken of by the higher castes, including Brahmans, convey pollution.

The pujari, or officiating priest, at this famous temple is a barber, and Brahmans, except those of the extreme orthodox section, partake of his preparations of rice, after they have been offered to the presiding deity. This is,



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apparently, the only case in which the rule laid down by Manu is followed in practice.

It is not known how far the text of Manu is answerable for the popular Sanskrit saying, which calls the barber a "good Sudra." There is an opinion entertained in certain quarters that originally the barber's touch did not pollute, but that his shaving did.

It is an interesting fact that, though the Ambattans are one of Manu's baseborn castes, whose touch causes pollution which requires the pouring of water over the head to remove it, they are one of the **most Brahmanised of the lower castes**. Nothing, perhaps, shows this so well as their marriage ceremonies, throughout which a Brahman officiates.

On the first two days, homam or sacred fire, fed with ghi (clarified butter) is kindled. On the third day, the tali (marriage badge) is placed in a circular silver or brass **thattu** (dish), and touched with the forefinger of the right hand first by the presiding Brahman, followed by other



Brahmans, men of superior castes, and the caste-men headed by the **Perithanakkaran** or head-man. It is then, amid weird music, tied to the bride's neck before the sacred fire. During this ceremony no widows may be present.

The relations of the bride and bridegroom scatter rice on the floor in front of the bridal pair, after the Brahman priest and head-man. This rice, which is called **sesham** (remainder), is strictly the perquisite of the local washerman. But it is generally purchased by the headman of the family, in which the marriage is taking place, and handed over, not to the washerman, but to the Perithanakkaran.

The Brahman receives as his fee money and a pair of silk-bordered cloths ; and, till the latter are given to him, he usually refuses to pronounce the necessary mantras (prayers). He also receives the first pin-supari (betel leaves and areca nuts), plantains, and cocoanuts.

Each day he has to get rid of the pollution caused by entering a barber's house by bathing.





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During the fourth and fifth days, homam is burnt, and **shadangu**, or merry-making between the bride and bridegroom before the assembled spectators, takes place, during which the bride sings songs, in which she has been coached from infancy. On the fifth day the removal of the **kankanam**, or threads which have been tied round the wrists of the bride and bridegroom, is performed, after the priest's account has been settled.

Among the **Konga Vellalas** of the Salem district, it is the Ambattan who officiates at the marriage rites, and ties the tali, after formally proclaiming to those present that he is about to do so. Brahmans are invited to the wedding, and are treated with due respect, and presented with money, rice, and betel. It would appear that, in this case, the Brahman has been ousted, in recent times, from his priestly functions by the Ambattan. The barber, when he ties the tali, mutters something about Brahman and Vedas in a respectful manner.





The story goes that, during the days of the Chera, Chola, and Pandya Kings, a Brahman and an Ambattan were both invited to a marriage feast. But the Brahman, on his arrival, died, and the folk, believing his death to be an evil omen, ruled that, as the Brahman was missing, they would have an Ambattan ; and it has ever since been the custom for the Ambattan to officiate at weddings.

A girl, when she reaches puberty, has to observe pollution for eleven days, during which she bathes daily, and is presented with a new cloth, and adorned by a girl who is said to have "touched" her. This girl has to bathe before she can take her meals, or touch others. Every morning, a dose of pure gingelly (*Sesamum indicum*) oil, mixed with white of egg, is administered. The dietary must be strictly vegetarian. On the twelfth day, the girl who has been through the ceremonial has a final bath, and enters the house after it has been purified (punyavachanam).



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The rule, once a widow always a widow, is as true of Ambattans as of high-class Brahmans. And, if asked whether the remarriage of widows is permitted, they promptly reply that they are not washermen.

The dead are cremated, with the exception of young children, who are buried. The death ceremonies are conducted by a Brahman priest, who is remunerated for his services with money and a cloth. Gifts of money and cloths are also made to other Brahmans, when the days of pollution are over.

Annual memorial ceremonies (**sradh**) are performed, as by Brahmans. It is a privilege (they consider it as such) of the Ambattans to cremate the bodies of village paupers other than Brahmans. And, on ordinary occasions of death, they lead the son or person who is entitled to light the funeral pyre, with a brass pot in their hands, round the corpse, and indicate with a burning cinder the place to which the light must be applied.



As a community the Ambattans are divided into Saivites and Vaishnavites. Members of the latter section, who have been branded by their Brahman guru with the **chank** and **chakram**, abstain from animal food, and intoxicating drinks.

Intermarriage between the two sections is allowed, and commonly practised. They belong to the **right-hand** faction, and will not eat with **Komatis**, who belong to the **left**. They have, however, no objection to shaving Komatis.

The Ambattans of the Chingleput district are divided into four sections, each of which is controlled by a *Perithanakkaran*. One of these resides in Madras, and the other three live respectively at **Poonamallce**, **Chingleput**, and **Karunguzhi** in the Madurantakam taluk of the Chingleput district.

Ambattans are now-a-days found over the whole Tamil area of the Madras Presidency. Originally, free movement into the various parts of the Presidency was far from easy, and every





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Ambattan, wherever he might migrate to, retained his subjection to the chief or headman of his native village. Thus, perhaps, what was at first a tribal division gradually developed into a territorial one.

Each Perithanakkaran has under him six hundred, or even a thousand **Kudithalakkarans**, or heads of families. His office being hereditary, he is, **if only a minor, treated with respect and dignity**. All the preliminaries of marriage are arranged by him. On important occasions, such as settling disputes, he is assisted by a panchayat, or council of elders. In this way are settled quarrels, questions arising out of adultery, or non-payment of fines, which it is his duty to collect.

He is further responsible for the marriage rice-money, which is added to a communal tax of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  annas per family, which is imposed annually for charitable purposes. The charities take the form of the maintenance of **chattrams**, or places where pilgrims are fed free of charge





at holy places. Two such institutions are maintained in the Chingleput district, the centre of the Ambattan community, one at Tirupporur, the other at Tirukalikundram.

At these places Brahmans are given free meals, and to other caste Hindus **sadabath**, or things necessary for meals, are presented. Sometimes the money is spent in building adjuncts to holy shrines. At Srirangam, for example, the Ambattans, in days gone by, built a fine stone mantapam for the local temple.

If the Perithanakkaran cannot satisfactorily dispose of a case with the assistance of the usual panchayat (council), it is referred to the higher authority of the **Kavarai** or **Desai Setti**, or even to **British Courts as a last resource**.

The barber has been summed up by a district official \* as "one of the most useful of the village servants. He leads an industrious life, his services being in demand on all occasions of marriages, feasts, and funerals. He often combines in himself the three useful vocations



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of **hair-dresser, surgeon, and musician**. In the early hours of the morning, he may be seen going his rounds to his employers' houses in his capacity of shaver and haircutter.

\* Madras Mail, 1906.

“Later on, he will be leading the village band of musicians before a wedding procession, or playing at a temple ceremony. Yet again he may be observed paying his professional visits as **Vythian** or physician, with his knapsack of surgical instruments and cutaneous drugs tucked under his arm.

“By long practice the barber becomes a fairly skilful operator with the knife, which he uses in a rough and ready manner. He lances ulcers and carbuncles, and even essays his hand in affections of the eye, often with the most disastrous results. It is the barber who takes away cricks and sprains, procures leeches for those wishing to be bled, and otherwise relieves the physical ills of his patients.



The barber woman, on the other hand, is the **accoucheuse** and midwife of the village matrons. It may be said without exaggeration that many of the uterine ailments which furnish patients to the maternity wards of the various hospitals in this country are attributable to the rude treatment of the village midwife."

The Ambattan will cut the nails, and shave not only the head and face, but **other parts of the body**, whereas the Telugu barber will shave only down to the waist. The **depilatory** operations on women are performed by female hair-dressers.

Barbers' sons are taught to shave by taking the bottom of an old well-burnt clay cooking-pot, and, with a blunt knife, scraping off the collected carbon. They then commence to operate on pubescent youths. The barber who shaves Europeans must not be a caste barber, but is either a Muhammadan or a non-caste man.

Quite recently, a youthful Ambattan had to undergo ceremonial purification for having





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unconsciously shaved a Paraiyan. Paraiyans, Malas, and other classes of the lower orders, have their own barbers and washermen.

Razors are, however, sometime lent to them by the Ambattans for a small consideration, and cleansed in water when they are returned. Parasitic skin diseases are said to originate from the application of a razor, which has been used on a number of miscellaneous individuals. And **well-to-do Hindus now keep their own razor**, which the barber uses when he comes to shave them.

In the southern districts, it is not usual for the Ambattans to go to the houses of their customers, but they have sheds at the backs of their own houses, where they attend to them from daybreak till about mid-day. Occasionally, when sent for, they will wait on Brahmans and high-class non- Brahmans at their houses. Numbers of them, besides, wait for customers near the riverside.

Like the English hair-cutter, the Ambattan is a





chatterbox, retails the petty gossip of the station, and is always posted in the latest local news and scandal. The barbers attached to British regiments are migratory, and, it is said, have friends and connections in all military cantonments, with whom they exchange news, and hold social intercourse.

The Ambattan fills the role of negotiator and go-between in the arrangement of marriages, feasts, and funeral. He is, moreover, the village physician and surgeon, and, in the days when blood-letting was still in vogue, the operation of **phlebotomy** was part of his business.

In modern times, his nose has, like that of the village potter, been put out of joint by civil hospitals and dispensaries. His medicines consist of pills made from indigenous drugs, the nature of which he does not reveal. His surgical instrument is the razor which he uses for shaving, and he does not resort to it until local applications, e.g., in a case of **carbuncle**, have failed. In return for his multifarious services to



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the villagers, the Ambattan was given a free grant of land, for which he has even now to pay only a nominal tax. But, in the days when there was no survey or settlement, if the barber neglected his duties, he was threatened with confiscation of his lands. At the present day, however, he can sell, mortgage, or make a gift thereof.

As the Ambattans became divided up into a number of families, their duties in the village were parcelled out among them, so that each barber family became attached to certain families of other castes, and was entitled to certain rights from them. Among other claims, each barber family became entitled to three or four **marakkals** of paddy (unhusked rice), which is the perquisite of the married members thereof.

It may be noted that, in village communities, lands were granted not only to the barber, but also to village officials such as the blacksmith, carpenter, washerman, astrologer, priest,



dancing-girl, etc.

In his capacity of barber, the Ambattan is called **Nasivan** (unholy man), or, according to the Census Reports, **Nasuvan** (sprung from the nose), or **Navidan**. He is also known as **Panditan** or **Pariyari** (doctor), and Kudimaghan (son of the ryot).

The last of these names is applied to him especially on occasions of marriage, when to call him Nasivan would be inauspicious. The recognised insigne of his calling is the small looking-glass, which he carries with him, together with the razor, and sometimes tweezers and ear-pick. **He must salute his superiors by prostrating himself on his stomach, folding his arms, and standing at a respectful distance.** He may not attend at Brahman houses on new or full-moon days, Tuesday, Saturday, and special days such as Ekadasi and Dwadasi. The most proper days are Sunday and Monday.

The quality of the shave varies with the skill of





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the individual, and there is a Tamil proverb "Go to an old barber and a new washerman." Stories are extant of barbers shaving kings while they were asleep without waking them, and it is said that the last Raja of Tanjore used to be thus entertained with exhibitions of their skill. The old legend of the barber who, in return for shaving a Raja without awakening him, requested that he might be made a Brahman, and how the Court jester Tennali Raman got the Raja to cancel his agreement, has recently been re-told in rhyme.\*

• A. P. Smith, Madras Review, 1902.

It is there described how the barber lathered the head "with water alone, for soap he had none." The modern barber, however, uses soap, either a cheap quality purchased in the bazar, or a more expensive brand supplied by his client.

By a curious corruption, Hamilton's bridge, which connects the Triplicane and Mylapore divisions of the city of Madras, has become



converted into Ambattan, or barber's bridge. And the barber, as he shaves you, will tell how, in days before the bridge was built, the channel became unfordable during- a north-east monsoon flood. A barber, who lived on the Triplicane side, had to shave an engineer, whose house was on the Mylapore side. With difficulty he swam across, and shaved the sahib while he was asleep without waking him, and, in return, asked that, in the public interests, a bridge should be built over the channel.

**Ambattans of Travancore.**—For the following note I am indebted to Mr. N. Subramani Aiyer. The barbers of Travancore are called by various designations, those in Central and South Travancore preferring to be known by the name of **Kshaurakan** or **Kshaurakkaran**, a corruption of the Sanskrit **kshuraka**, while Ambattan seems to find general favour in the south.

A curious name given to the caste throughout Travancore is **Pranopakari**, or one who helps



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the souls, indicating their priestly functions in the ceremonials of various castes. A contraction of this name found in the early settlement records is **Pranu**. The members of those families from which kings and noblemen have at any time selected their barbers are called **Vilakkittalavan**, or more properly **Vilakkuttalayan**, meaning literally those who shave heads.

In North Travancore many families are in possession of royal edicts conferring upon them the title of **Panikkar**, and along with it the headmanship of the barber families of the village in which they reside. Others have the title of **Vaidyan** or doctor, from the secondary occupation of the caste.

Endless endogamous septs occur among the barbers, and, at Trivandrum, there are said to be four varieties called **Chala Vazhi**, **Pandi Vazhi**, **Attungal Vazhi**, and **Peruntanni Vazhi**. But it is possible to divide all the Kshaurakans of Travancore into three classes, viz.,





Malayalam-speaking Ambattans, who follow the **makkathayam** law of inheritance ; (2) Malayalam speaking Ambattans who follow the *marumakkathayam* law of inheritance ; (3) Tamil-speaking barbers, who have in many localities adopted Malayalam as their mother-tongue, and indicate their recent conversion in this direction by preserving unchanged the dress and ornaments of their women-kind.

In Pattanapuram, for example, there is a class of Malayalam-speaking barbers known as **Pulans** who immigrated into that taluk from the Tamil country about two hundred years ago and reveal their kinship with the Tamil-speaking barbers in various ways.

In Kottayam and some other North Travancore taluks, a large number of barbers may be described as recent converts of this character. In theory at least, the makkathayam and marumakkathayam Ambattans may be said to form two distinct endogamous groups, of which the former regard themselves as far



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superior to the latter in social position.

Sometimes the makkathayam Ambattans give their girls in marriage to the marumakkathayam Ambattans, though the converse can never hold good. But, in these cases, the girl is not permitted to re-enter the paternal home, and associate with the people therein.

A local tradition describes the Travancore Kshaurakans as pursuing their present occupation owing to the curse of **Surabhi**, the divine calf. Whatever their origin, they have faithfully followed their traditional occupation, and, in addition, many study medicine in their youth, and attend to the ailments of the villagers, while the women act as midwives.

When a high-caste Hindu dies, the duty of supplying the fuel for the funeral pyre, and watching the burning ground, devolves on the barber. In their dress and ornaments the Travancore barbers closely resemble the Nayars, but some wear round gold beads and a conch-shaped marriage jewel round the neck, to



distinguish their women from those of the Nayars. This, however, does not hold good in South Travancore, where the women have entirely adopted the Nayar type of jewellery.

Tattooing prevails to a greater extent among the barbers than among other classes, but has begun to lose its popularity. The barbers not only worship the ordinary Hindu deities, but also adore such divinities as **Murti**, **Maden**, and **Yakshi**.

The corpses of those who die as the result of accident or contagious disease, are buried, not burnt. A sorcerer is called on to raise the dead from the grave, and, at his instance, a **kuryala** or small thatched shed is erected, to provide a sanctum for the resurrected spirit. Every year, in the month of Makaram (January-February), the day on which the Utradam star falls is taken as the occasion for making offerings to these spirits.

In every village certain families had bestowed on them by the chieftains of Kerala the right of





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deciding all questions affecting the caste. All social offences are tried by them, and the decision takes the form of an order to celebrate **iananguttu** or feast of the equals, at which the first article served on the leaf placed before the assembled guests is not food, but a sum of money.

The tali-kettu and sambandham ceremonies are celebrated, the former before, and the latter after the girl has reached puberty. The preliminary rites of betrothal and **kapu-kettu** (tying the string round the wrist) over, the bridegroom enters the marriage hall in procession. There are no Vedic rites; nor is there any definite priest for the marriage ceremony. The conch-shell is blown at odd intervals, this being considered indispensable. The festivities last for four days.

A niece and nephew are regarded as the most legitimate spouses of a son and daughter respectively.

After the cremation or burial of a corpse, a



rope is held by two of the relations between the dead person's remains and the **karta** (chief mourner), and cut in two, as if to indicate that all connection between the karta and the deceased has ceased. This is called **bandham aruppu**, or severing of connection.

Pollution lasts for sixteen days among all sections of the barbers, except the Tamils, who regain their purity after a death in the family on the eleventh day.

**Ambiga.**—A synonym of Kabbera.

**Ambojala** (lotus : *Nelumbium*).—A house-name of Korava.

**Amma** (mother).—A sub-division of Pallan and Paraiyan. It is also the title of the various goddesses, or mothers, such as **Ellamma**, **Mariamma**, etc., which are worshipped as Grama Devatas (village deities) at the temples known as Amman-koil.

**Ammukkuvan.**—A sub-division of **Katarayan**.\* (See Valan.)



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\* Cochin Census Report, 1901.

**Anapa** (*Dolichos Lablab*).—A gotra of Komati.

**Anasa** (*ferrule*).—A gotra of Kurni.

**Anchu** (edge or border).—A gotra of Kurni.

**Andara** (pandal or booth).—A sept of Kuruba.

**Ande**.—Ande (a pot) as a division of the Kurubas refers to the small bamboo or wooden vessel used when milking goats. It further denotes a division of the Koragas, who used to wear a pot suspended from their necks, into which they were compelled to spit, so as not to defile the highway.

**Anderaut**.—Recorded, in the Census Report, 1901, as a sub-division of Kurumba. Probably a form of **Ande Kuruba**. Raut is frequently a title of headmen among Lingayats.

**Andi**.—In a note on Andis in the Madras Census Report, 1901, Mr. W. Francis writes that "for a Brahman or an ascetic, mendicancy was





always considered an honourable profession, to which no sort of shame attached. Manu says ' a Brahman should constantly shun worldly honour, as he would shun poison, and rather constantly seek disrespect as he would seek nectar'; and every Brahman youth was required to spend part of his life as a beggar. The Jains and Buddhists held the same views. The Hindu **Chattrams** \* and **Uttupuras**, the Jain Pallis, and the Buddhist Viharas owe their origin to this attitude, they being originally intended for the support of the mendicant members of these religions. But persons of other than the priestly and religious classes were expected to work for their living, and were not entitled to relief in these institutions.

\* Houses where pilgrims and travellers are entertained, and fed gratuitously.

“Begging among such people—unless, as in the case of the Pandarams and Andis, a religious flavour attaches to it—is still



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considered disreputable. The percentage of beggars in the Tamil districts to the total population is .97, or more than twice what it is in the Telugu country, while in Malabar it is as low as .09. The Telugus are certainly not richer as a class than the Tamils, and the explanation of these differences is perhaps to be found in the fact that the south is more religiously inclined than the north, and has more temples and their connected charities (religion and charity go hand in hand in India), and so offers more temptation to follow begging as a profession. Andis are Tamil beggars. They are really inferior to Pandarams, but the two terms are in practice often indiscriminately applied to the same class of people.

Pandarams are usually Vellalas by caste, but Andis are recruited from all classes of Sudras, and they consequently have various subdivisions, which are named after the caste to which the members of each originally belonged, such as the Jangam Andis, meaning: beggars



of the Jangam caste, and the Jogi Andis, that is, Andis of the Jogi caste. They also have occupational and other divisions, such as the Kovil Andis, meaning those who do service in temples, and the Mudavandis or the lame beggars.

Andi is in fact almost a generic term. All Andis are not beggars however ; some are bricklayers, others are cultivators, and others are occupied in the temples. They employed Brahman priests at their ceremonies, but all of them eat meat and drink alcohol.

Widows and divorcees may marry again. Among the Tinnevelly Andis, the sister of the bridegroom ties the tali (marriage badge) round the bride's neck, which is not usual."

In the Madras Census Report, 1891, the Andis are summed up as "beggars who profess the Saiva faith. They may be found in all the Tamil districts, begging from door to door, beating a small gong with a stick. The Andis differ from most other castes, in that a person of





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any caste may join their community. Some of them officiate as priests in village temples, especially when large sacrifices of goats, buffaloes, and pigs are made. They usually bury the dead. They have returned 105 subdivisions, of which the most important are the following :—Jangam, Komanandi, Lingadari, Mudavandi, and Uppandi.

**Komanam** is the small loin cloth, and a **Komanandi** goes naked, except for this slight concession to decency. **Mudam** means lame, and the **Mudavandis** ((*q.v.*) are allowed to claim any deformed child belonging to the Konga Vellala caste. The etymology of Uppandi is difficult, but it is improbable that it has any connection with uppu, salt.

In the Tanjore Manual, it is noted that "in its ordinary acceptation the word Andi means houseless beggars, and is applied to those who profess the Saiva faith. They go out every morning, begging for alms of uncooked rice, singing ballads or hymns. They play on a small



gong called **semakkalam** with a stick, and often carry a conch shell, which they blow. They are given to drinking."

It is recorded\* that "South Indian beggars are divided into two classes, **Panjathandi** and **Paramparaiandi**. The former are famine-made beggars, and the latter are beggars from generation to generation. The former, a common saying goes, would rob from the person of a child at a convenient opportunity, while the latter would jump into a well, and pick up a child which had fallen into it by an accident, and make it over to its parents."

\* C. Hayavadana Rao. Tales of Komati Wit and Wisdom, 1907.

Andi (a god) occurs as an exogamous section of Sirukudi Kallans.

**Andinia**.—Recorded by Mr. F. Fawcett as an inferior sub-division of Dombs, who eat frogs.

**Anduran**.—A sub-division of Nayar potters, who manufacture earthenware articles for use in



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temples. The name is derived from Andur, a place which was once a fief under the Zamorin of Calicut.

**Ane** (elephant).—An exogamous sept of Holeyā, Kappiliyan, Kuruba, Kadu Kurumba, Moger, and Gangadikara Vakkaliga. Yenigala or Ycnuga (elephant) is further an exogamous sept of Kapus, who will not touch ivory. Anai-kombu (elephant tusk) occurs as a sub-division of Idaiyan.

**Angarakudu** (the planet Mars).—A synonym of Manoala.

**Anja**.—In the Madras Census Report, 1891, Ajna is returned as a sub-division of Pallan. This, however, seems to be a mistake for Anja (father), by which name these Pallans address their fathers.

**Anju Nal** (five days).—Recorded in the Salem Manual, as a name given to Pallis who perform the death ceremony on the fifth day after death.





**Amjuttan** (men of the five hundred).—Recorded at times of census, as a sub-division of Panan, and a synonym of Velan. In the Gazetteer of Malabar, it appears as a sub-division of Mannans, who are closely akin to the Velans. The equivalent Anjuttikar occurs as a synonym for Tenkanchi Vellalas in Travancore.

**Anna** (brother).—The title of numerous classes, e.g., Dasari, Gavara, Golla, Konda Dora, Koppala Velama, Mangala, Mila, Paidi, and Segidi.

**Annam** (cooked rice).—An exogamous sept of Gamalla and Togata.

**Annavi**.—A title of Savalakkars, who play on the **nagasaram** (reed instrument) in temples.

**Antalavar**.—Recorded in the Travancore Census Report, 1901, as a sub-division of Nayar.

**Antarala**.—A synonym of Ambalavasi, denoting those who occupy an intermediate position between Brahmans and Sudras.



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**Antarjanam** (inside person).—A term applied to Nambutiri Brahman females, who live in seclusion.\*

\* Wigram, Malabar Law and Custom.

**Anuloma**.—One of the two classes of Sudras, viz., Anuloma and Veloma. The term Anuloma is applied to those born of a higher-caste male and a lower-caste female, e.g., barbers are said to be the offspring of a Brahman and a Vaisya woman.

**Anumala** (seeds of *Dolichos Lablab*).—An exogamous sept of Devanga. The equivalent Annmolla occurs as an exogamous sept of Kamma.

**Anuppan**. The Anuppanns are described, in the Madras Census Report, 1891, as "a small caste of Canarese farmers, found chiefly in the districts of Madura, Tinnevely, and Coimbatore. Their original home appears to have been Mysore or South Canara, probably the former. Their language is a corrupt form of Canarese.



The most important sub-division is **Allikulam** (lily clan). Some of them are Saivites, and others Vaishnavites.

“Brahmans are employed as priests by the Vaishnavites, but not by the Saivites. Remarriage of widows is practised, but a woman divorced for adultery cannot remarry during the life-time of her husband.”

In the Gazetteer of the Madura district, it is stated that "the Anuppanns are commonest in the Kambam valley. They have a tradition regarding their migration thither, which closely resembles that current among the **Kappiliyans** and **Tottiyans** (*q.v.*).

Local tradition at Kambam says that the Anuppanns were in great strength here in olden days, and that quarrels arose, in the course of which the chief of the Kappiliyans, **Ramachcha Kavandan**, was killed. With his dying breath he cursed the Anuppanns, and thenceforth they never prospered, and now not one of them is left in the town. Their title is Kavandan. They





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are divided into six territorial groups called Medus, which are named after three villages in this district, and three in Tinnevely. Over each of these is a headman called the Periyadanakkaran, and the three former are also subject to a Guru who lives at Sirupalai near Madura.

These three are divided again into eighteen **kilais** or branches, each of which intermarries only with certain of the others. Caste panchayats (councils) are held on a blanket, on which (compare the Tottiyar custom) is placed a pot of water containing **margosa** (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves, to symbolise the sacred nature of the meeting.

Women who go astray with men of other castes are expelled, and various ceremonies, including (it is said) the **burying alive of a goat**, are enacted to show that they are dead to the community. The right of a man to his paternal aunt's daughter is as vigorously maintained as among the Kappiliyans and Tottiyans, and leads



to the same curious state of affairs (i.e., a woman, whose husband is too young to fulfil the duties of his position, is allowed to consort with his near relations, and the children so begotten are treated as his).

No tali (marriage badge) is tied at weddings, and the binding part of the ceremonies is the linking, on seven separate occasions, of the little fingers of the couple. Like the Kappiliyans, the Anuppans have many caste and family deities, a number of whom are women who committed sati." (See Kappiliyan).

**Apoto.**—Apoto, or Oppoto, is a sub-division of Gaudos, the occupation of which is palanquin-bearing.

**Appa** (father),—A title of members of various Telugu and Canarese castes, e.g., Idiga, Kannadiyan, Linga Baliya, and Tambala.

**Arab.**—A Muhammadan territorial name, returned at times of census. In the Mysore Census Report, 1901, the Arabs are described



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as itinerant tradesmen, whose chief business is horse-dealing, though some deal in cloths.

**Aradhya.**—For the following note I am indebted to Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao. The Aradhyas are a sect of Brahmans found mainly in the four northern districts of the Madras Presidency, and to a smaller extent in the Cuddapah and Kurnool districts. A few are also found in the Mysore State.

They differ in almost every important respect from other Brahmans.

Basava, the founder of the Lingayat religion, was born in a family of Brahmans, who, with others round about them, were apparently the first converts to his religion. According to Mr. C. P. Brown,\* they were "in all probability his personal friends ; he persuaded them to lay aside their name, and call themselves Aradhya or Reverend.'

\* Madras Juurn. Lit. and Science, XI, 176, 1840.





“They revere the four Aradhyas, visionary personages of the Lingayat creed, of whom very little is known. At all social and religious functions, birth, marriage, initiation and funerals, four vases of water are solemnly placed in their name, and then invoked to preside over them. Their names are **Revanaradhya**, **Marularadhya**, **Ekoramaradhya**, and **Panditaradhya**.

“In four ages, it is said, these four successively appeared as precursors of the divine Basava, and were, like Basava, Brahmans. A Purana, known as the **Panditaradhya Charitra**, is named after the last of these. Versions thereof are found both in Canarese and Telugu. A Sanskrit poem, called Siddhanta Sikhamani, represents Revanaradhya as a human manifestation of one of the ministers of Siva.

As might be expected, the members of this sect are staunch Saivites. They wear both the Brahminical sacred thread, and the linga suspended from another thread. They revere in



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particular Ganapathi. The lingam which they wear they usually call the **prana lingam**, or life lingam. The moment a child, male or female, is born, it is invested with the lingam ; otherwise it is not considered to have pranam or life.

“The popular belief is that, if by some accident the lingam is lost, a man must either fast until he recovers it, or not survive so dire a calamity. This is a fixed dogma with them. A man who loses his prana linga stands up to his neck in water, and repeats mantrams (sacred formulse) for days together ; and, on the last day, the lost lingam comes back to him miraculously, if he has been really orthodox in his life. If he does not succeed in recovering it, he must starve and die. The theory is that the lingam is the life of the man who wears it, and, when it is lost beyond recovery, he loses his own life.

Incredible stories of miraculous recoveries of the lingam are told. In one case, it is said to have returned to its owner, making a loud noise



in water; and in another it was found in a box under lock and key.

In this connection, the following story is narrated by Colonel Wilks.\*

"Poornia, the present minister of Mysore, relates an incident of a Lingayat friend of his, who had unhappily lost his portable God, and came to take a last farewell. The Indians, like more enlightened nations, readily laugh at the absurdities of every sect but their own, and Poornia gave him better counsel.

\* Historical Sketches of the South of India.

“It is a part of the ceremonial preceding the sacrifice of the individual that the principal persons of the sect should assemble on the bank of some holy stream, and, placing in a basket the lingam images of the whole assembly, purify them in the sacred waters. The destined victim in conformity to the advice of his friend, suddenly seized the basket, and overturned its contents into the rapid Caveri. Now, my friends, said he, we are on equal





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terms ; let us prepare to die together. The discussion terminated according to expectation. The whole party took an oath of inviolable secrecy, and each privately provided himself with a new image of the lingam."

Aradhyas, as has been indicated, differ from other Brahmans in general in some of their customs. Before they partake of food, they make an offering of it to the lingam which they are wearing. As they cannot eat without making this offering, they have the entire meal served up at the commencement thereof. They offer the whole to the lingam, and then begin to eat. They do not accept offerings distributed in temples as other Brahmans do, because they have already been offered to the God, and cannot therefore be offered again to the lingam. Unlike other Lingayats, Aradhyas believe in the Vedas, to which they give allegorical interpretations. They are fond of reading Sanskrit, and a few have been well-known Telugu poets. Thus, **Palapuri Somanatha**, who



lived in the fourteenth century A.D., composed the **Basava Purana** and the **Panditaradhya Charitra**, and the brothers **Piduparthi Somanatha** and the **Basavakavi**, who lived in the sixteenth century, composed other religious works.

Aradhyas marry among themselves, and occasionally take girls in marriage from certain of the **Niyogi** subdivisions of the Northern Circars. This would seem to show that they were themselves Niyogis, prior to their conversion.

They do not intermarry with **Aruvelu Niyogis**.

Unlike other Brahmans, they bury their dead in a **sitting posture**. They observe death pollution for ten days, and perform the **ekodishta** and other Brahminical ceremonies for their progenitors. They perform annually, not the Brahminical **sradha**, but the **aradhana**. In the latter, there is no **apasavyam** (wearing the sacred thread from right to left), and no use of gingelly seeds and **dharba** grass. Nor is there



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homam (raising the sacrificial fire), **parvanam** (offering of rice-balls), or oblation of water. Widows do not have their heads shaved.

The title of the Aradhyas is always Aradhya.

**Arakala.**—A small class of cultivators, recorded mainly from the Kurnool district. The name is possibly derived from araka, meaning a plough with bullocks, or from arakadu, a cultivator.

**Arampukatti.**—The name, denoting those who tie flower-buds or prepare garlands, of a sub-division of Vellalas.

**Aranadan,** See Ernadan,

**Arane** (lizard).—An exogamous sub-sept of Kappiliyan.

**Arashina** (turmeric).—A gotra or exogamous sept of Agasa, Kurni, Kuruba, and Odde. The equivalent **Pasupula** occurs as an exogamous sept of Devanga. In Southern India, turmeric (*Curcuma*) is commonly called saffron (*Crocus*). Turmeric enters largely into Hindu ceremonial.





For example, the practice of smearing the face with it is very widespread among females, and, thinking that it will give their husbands increase of years, women freely bathe themselves with turmeric water. The use of water, in which turmeric has been infused, and by which they give the whole body a bright yellow colour, is prescribed to wives as a mark of the conjugal state, and forbidden to widows.\*

\* Ellis. Kural.

To ward off the evil eye, a vessel containing turmeric water and other things is waved in front of the bridal couple at weddings. Or they are bathed in turmeric water, which they pour over each other. The tali or **bottu** (gold marriage badge) is attached to a cotton thread dyed with turmeric, and, among some castes, the tying together of the hands of the bride and bridegroom with such a thread is the binding portion of the ceremony.

**Arasu or Rajpinde.**—"This caste," Mr. Lewis Rice writes (1877).—"are relatives of or



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connected with the Rajahs of Mysore. During the life-time of the late Maharaja, they were divided into two factions in consequence of the refusal of thirteen families headed by the **Dalavayi** (the chief of the female branch) to pay respect to an illegitimate son of His Highness. The other eighteen families consented to the Rajah's wishes, and treat the illegitimate branch, called **Komarapatta**, as equals.

\* Mysore and Coorg Gazetteer, 1876-78.

The two divisions intermarry and eat together, and the family quarrel, though serious at the time, is not likely to be permanent. They are employed chiefly under Government and in agriculture, most of the former being engaged in the palace at Mysore. Rajpindes are both Vishnavites and Sivites, and their priests are both Brabmans and Lingayat Waders."

In the Madras Census Report, 1891, Arasu (= Raja or king) is given as a sub-division of the Tamil Pallis and Paraiyans. **Urs** appears as a



contracted form of Arasu in the names of the Mysore royal family, e.g. Kantaraj Urs.

**Arathi.**—The name, indicating a wave offering to avert the evil eye, of an exogamous sept of Kuruba.

**Arati** (plantain tree).—An exogamous sept of **Chenchu**.

**Arava.**—Arava, signifying Tamil, has been recorded as a sub-division of some Telugu classes, e.g., Golla and Velama. The name, however, refers to Tamil *Idaiyans* and *Vellalas*, who have settled in the Telugu country, and are known respectively as **Arava Golla** and **Arava Velama**. In some places in the Telugu country, Tamil Paraiyans, employed as servants under Europeans, horsekeepers, etc., are known as **Arava Malalu** (Malas).

The Irulas of the North Arcot district are, in like manner, sometimes called **Arava Yanadis**. Arava also occurs as a division of Tigalas, said to be a section of the Tamil Pallis, who have





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settled in Mysore. An ingenious suggestion has been made that Arava is derived from ara, half, vayi, mouthed, in reference to the defective Tamil alphabet, or to the termination of the words being mostly in consonants.

**Aravan.**—Recorded, in the Travancore Census Report, 1901, as a sub-division of Nayar.

**Arayan.**—See Valan.

**Archaka.**—Archaka, or Umai Archaka, is a title of Occhans, who are priests at temples of Grama Devatas (village deities).

**Are.** A synonym for Marathi. The name occurs as a sub-division of **Kunchigar** and **Kudubi**. In South Canara **Arya Kshatri** occurs as the equivalent of Are, and, in the Telugu country, **Are Kapu** refers to Marathi cultivators. **Arya Kuttadi** is a Tamil synonym of Marathi Dommaras.

Concerning the Ares, Mr. H. G. Stuart writes as follows. \* "Of the total number of 6,809 Ares,



4,373 are found in South Canara, Bellary and Anantapur, and these are true Ares. Of the rest I am not able to speak with certainty, as the term Arya, which is a synonym of Are, is also used as an equivalent of Marathi, and sometimes in a still wider sense. The true Ares are husbandmen of Maratha origin. They wear the sacred thread, have Brahmans as their priests, and give allegiance to the head of the **Sringeri Mutt**.

\* Madras Census Report, 1891.

Marriage of girls takes place either before or after puberty, and the remarriage of widows is not allowed. A husband may divorce his wife for adultery, but a wife cannot divorce her husband. When the guilt of a woman is proved, and the sanction of the Guru obtained, the husband performs the act of divorce by cutting a pumpkin in two at a place where three ways meet.

The use of animal food is allowed, but intoxicating liquors are forbidden.



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"The Ares of South Canara, Mr, Stuart writes further, \* "usually speak Marathi or Konkani, but in the Kasaragod taluk, and possibly in other parts too, they speak Canarese. Their exogamous septs are called manathanas. They use the **dhare** form of marriage (see Bant), but the pot contains a mixture of water, milk, ghee (clarified butter), honey and curds instead of the usual plain water."

\* Manual of the South Canara district.

The Marathi-speaking **Areyavaru** or **Aryavaru** of the South Canara district follow the **makkala santana** law of inheritance (from father to son). For ceremonial purposes, they engage Shivalli Brahmans.

An interesting feature of the marriage rites is that the bridegroom makes a pretence of going to a battle-field to fight, presumably to show that he is of Kshatriya descent. The ceremony is **called dandal jatai**. The bridegroom ties a bead on the neck of the bride if of the **Powar** sept,





and a disc if of the **Edar** sept.

The Areyavaru eat fowls and fish. The former are killed after certain mantrams (prayers) have been uttered, and, if a priest is available, it is his duty to despatch the bird. The caste deity is **Ammanoru** (Durga), in the worship of whom the Areyavaru, like other Maratha castes, employ **Gondala** mendicants.

**Are** (*Bauhunia racemosa*).—A gotra of Kurni.

**Ari**.—The Aris or Dotans are described, in the Travancore Census Report, 1901, as a "small but interesting community confined to a village in the Tovala taluk. By traditional occupation they are the Ambalavasis of the Saivaite temple of Darsanamkoppa. They are strict vegetarians, wear the Brahminical thread, perform all the Brahminical ceremonies under the guidance of Brahman priests, and claim a position equal to that of the Aryappattars. But they are not allowed to dine with the Brahmans, or to enter the mandapa in front of the garbhagriha, the inner sanctuary of a Hindu shrine. Their dress



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and ornaments are like those of the Tamil Brahmans, and their language is Tamil. Their period of pollution, however, is as long as fifteen days."

**Ari** (ebony).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba.

**Arigala**.—Arigala, denoting a dish carried in procession, occurs as an exogamous sept of **Mutracha**. Arigala and Arika, both meaning the millet *Paspalum scrobiculatum*, are septs of Jatapu and Panta Reddi. The latter may not use the grain as food.

**Arikuravan**.—Recorded, in the Travancore Census Report, 1901, as a sub-division of Nayar.

**Arisi**.—A sub-division of Savara.

**Ariyar**.—Ariyar or Ariyanattu Chetti is given as a caste title by Pattanavans.

**Ariyur**.—Ariyur or Ariviyur is the name of a subdivision of **Nattukottai Chettis**.

**Arli** (*Ficus religiosa*).—An exogamous sept of Stanika.



**Arudra** (lady-bird).—An exogamous sept of Kalingi.

**Arupathukatchi** (sixty house section).—A subdivision of Valluvan.

**Arupattanal** **Taleikattu** (sixty-four, who covered their heads).—A sub-division of Chetti.

**Aruththukattatha**.—The name, meaning those who do not tie the tali a second time, of a section of Paraiyans who do not allow the remarriage of widows.

**Aruva**.—The Aruvas are an interesting "caste of cultivators along the sea-coast in the Berhampur taluk of Ganjam. They say that they are descended from the offspring of alliances between Patanis (Muhammadans) and Oriya women.

Like other Oriya castes, they have a number of titles, e.g., Nayako, Patro, Podhano, Ponda, Mondolo, and Mollana, some of which seem to be exogamous, and there are also numerous exogamous septs or **bamsams**. The headman is





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styled Nayako, and he is assisted by a **Bhollobhaya**. Both these offices are hereditary. The Aruvas say that they belong to two Vedas, viz., the males to *Atharva Veda*, and the females to *Yajur Veda*. Muhammadans are believed by them to be *Atharvavedis*.

A member of the caste, called **Mollana**, officiates on ceremonial occasions. A pure Oriya casteman will not allow his son to marry his sister's daughter, but this is permitted in most places by the Aruvas. The marriage ceremonial, except in a few points of detail, conforms to the general Oriya type.

On the day before the wedding, a milk-post of bamboo is erected, and in front of it a new cloth, and various articles for worship are placed. When the fingers of the contracting couple are linked together, and at other stages of the marriage rites, the Mollana recites certain formulæ, in which the words *Bismillahi* and **Allah** occur.

The dead are always buried. In former days,



stone slabs, with Arabic or Hindustani legends in Oriya characters inscribed on them, used to be set up over the grave. For these, two sticks are now substituted. The corpse of a dead person is sewn up in a kind of sack.

As it is being lowered into the grave, the Mollana recites formulæ, and those present throw earth over it before the grave is filled in. They then take their departure, and the Mollana, standing on one leg, recites further formulae.

On the following day, bitter food, consisting of rice and margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves, is prepared, and given to the agnates. On the third day after death, the burial-ground is visited, and, after water has been poured over the grave, a cloth is spread thereon. On this relations of the deceased throw earth and food. A purificatory ceremony, in which ghi (clarified butter) is touched, is performed on the fifteenth day. On the fortieth day, the Mollana officiates at a ceremony in which food is offered to the dead person.



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The Aruvas do not take part in any Muhammadan ceremonial, and do not worship in mosques. Most of them are **Paramarthos**, and all worship various Hindu deities and **Takuranis** (village gods). At their houses, the god is represented by a mass of mud of conical shape, with an areca nut on the top of it. In recent times, a number of Aruva families, owing to a dispute with the Mollana, do not employ him for their ceremonials, in which they follow the standard Oriya type.

They neither interdine nor intermarry with other sections of the community, and have become an independent section thereof.

**Arya.**—Arya or Ariya (noble) occurs as a class of Pattar Brahmans, a division of Samagaras, and an exogamous sept of Kurubas. Some Pattanavans call themselves **Ariya Nattu Chetti** (Chettis of the country of chiefs) Ariyar, or Ayyayirath Thalaivar (the five thousand chiefs).

**Asadi.**—The Asadis of the Bellary district are





summed up, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as "a sub-caste of Mala or Holey, which, in Bellary, are almost interchangeable terms. They are prostitutes and dancers."

Among the **Madigas**, men called Asadi, who have undergone an initiation ceremony, go about, in company with the **Matangis** (dedicated prostitutes), playing on an instrument called the **chaudike**, and singing the praises and reciting the story of Ellamma. (See Madiga.)

**Asan** (teacher).—The title of **Variyans**, who have held the hereditary position of tutors in noblemen's families. Also a title of **Pisharati** and **Kanisan**.

**Asari**.—In most parts of the Madras Presidency, Mr. H. A. Sturat writes, "Asari (or Achari) is synonymous with Kammalan, and may denote any of the five artizan castes, but in Malabar it is practically confined to the carpenter caste. The Asari of Malabar is the Brahman of the Kammala castes. The Kammala castes generally pollute Nayers by approaching



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within twelve feet, and Brahmans by coming within thirty-six feet ; but an Asari with his measuring rod in his hand has the privilege of approaching very near, and even entering the houses of higher castes without polluting them. This exception may have arisen out of necessity."

At the census, 1901, some **Sayakkarans** (Tamil dyers) returned Asari as a title.

In a Government office, a short time ago, the head clerk, a Brahman named Rangachari, altered the spelling of the name of a Kammalan from Velayudachari to Velayudasari in the office books, on the ground that the former looked Brahmanical.

**Ashtakshari** (eight syllables).—A sub-division of **Satanis**, who believe in the efficacy of the eight syllables **om-na-mo-na-ra-ya-na-ya** in ensuring eternal bliss. The name **ashtabhukkulu**, or those who eat the eight greedily, also occurs as a sub-division of the same people.



**Ashtalohi.**—The name, meaning workers in eight metals, of a small class of Oriya artizans. According to one version the eight metals are gold, silver, bell-metal, copper, lead, tin, iron, and brass ; according to another, gold, silver, copper, tin, lead, load-stone, iron, and steel.

**Ashtikurissi.**—Ashtikurissi (ashti, a bone) or Attikurissi is an occupational sub-division of Nayars and Marans, who officiate at the funerals of Nambutiri Brahmans and Nayars, and help in collecting the remains of the bones after cremation.

**Asili.**—The name for Telugu toddy-drawers in the Cuddapah district. (See Idiga.)

**Asupani.**—An occupational name for Marans who play on the temple musical instruments *asu* and *pani*.

**Asvo** (horse).—An exogamous sept of Ghas.,

**Atagara** or **Hatagara.**—A sub-division of Devanga.

**Aththi** (*Ficus glomerata*).—An exogamous





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sept of Stanika.

**Atikunnan.** Recorded, in the Travancore Census Report, 1901, as a sub-division of Nayar.

**Atreya.**—A Brahmanical gotra of Bhatrazus. Atreyas are descendants of Atri, a rishi who is regarded by some as one of the ten Prajapatis of Manu.

**Atta** (mother).—A sub-division of Pallan.

**Attangarai** (river-bank).—A sub-division of Konga Vellala.

**Attikankana** (cotton marriage thread).—A subdivision of Kurubas, who tie a cotton thread round the wrist at weddings.

**Atumpatram.**—A name, meaning an object which dances, for Deva-dasis in Travancore.

**Aunvallur** (possessors of cattle).—A fanciful name for **Idaiyans**.

**Avaru.**—A synonym of Agar.

**Aviri** (*hidigofera tinctoria*).—An exogamous sept of Padma Sales, who use indigo in the



manufacture of coloured cloth fabrics.

**Avisa** (*Sesbania grandiflora*).—A gotra of **Medara**.

**Avu** (snake).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba.

**Avula** (cow),—An exogamous sept of Baliya, Boya, Golla, Kapu, Korava, Mutracha, and Yerukala.

**Ayar** (cow-herd).—A synonym or sub-division of Idaiyan and **Kolayan**.

**Ayodhya** (Oudh).—A sub-division of **Kapus**, who say that they originally lived in Oudh.

**Azhati**.—Recorded, in the Travancore Census Report, 1901, as a synonym of **Pisharati**.



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**Badaga.**—As the Todas are the pastoral, and the Kotas the artisan tribe of the Nilgiris, so the agricultural element on these hills is represented by the Badagas (or, as they are sometimes called. **Burghers**). Their number was returned, at the census, 1901, as 34,178 against 1,267 Kotas, and 807 Todas.

Though the primary occupation of the Badagas is agriculture, there are among their community, schoolmasters, clerks, public works contractors, bricklayers, painters, carpenters, sawyers, tailors, gardeners, forest guards, barbers, washermen, and scavengers. Many work on tea and coffee estates, and gangs of Badagas can always be seen breaking stones on, and repairing the hill roads. Others are, at the present day, earning good wages in the Cordite Factory near Wellington. Some of the more prosperous possess tea and coffee estates of their own.

The rising generation are, to some extent,





learning Tamil and English, in addition to their own language, which is said to resemble old Canarese. And I have heard a youthful Badaga, tending a flock of sheep, address an errant member thereof in very fluent Billingsgate. There were, in 1904-1905, thirty-nine Badaga schools, which were attended by 1,222 pupils. In 1907, one Badaga had passed the Matriculation of the Madras University, and was a clerk in the Sub-judge's Court at Ootacamund.

A newspaper discussion was carried on a few years ago as to the condition of the Badagas, and whether they are a down-trodden tribe, bankrupt and impoverished to such a degree that it is only a short time before something must be done to ameliorate their condition, and save them from extermination by inducing them to emigrate to the Wynad and Vizagapatam.

A few have, in recent years, migrated to the **Anaimalai** hills, to work on the planters' estates, which have been opened up there. One writer stated that "the tiled houses, costing from Rs.



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250 to Rs. 500, certainly point to their prosperity. They may frequently borrow from the Labbai to enable them to build, but, as I do not know of a single case in which the Labbai has ever seized the house and sold it, I believe this debt is soon discharged.

The walled-in, terraced fields immediately around their villages, on which they grow their barley and other grains requiring rich cultivation, are well worked, and regularly manured.

The coats, good thick blankets, and gold earrings, which most Badagas now possess, can only, I think, point to their prosperity, while their constant feasts, and disinclination to work on Sundays, show that the loss of a few days' pay does not affect them.

On the other hand, a former Native official on the Nilgiris writes to me that "though the average Badaga is thrifty and hard-working, there is a tendency for him to be lazy when he is sure of his meal. When a person is sick in another village, his relatives make it an excuse



to go and see him, and they have to be fed.

When the first crop is raised, the idler pretends that ' worms ' have crept into the crop, and the gods have to be propitiated, and there is a feast. Marriage or death, of course, draws a crowd to be fed or feasted. All this means extra expenditure, and a considerable drain on the slender income of the family. The **Rowthan** (Muhammadan merchant) from the Tamil country is near at hand to lend money, as he has carried his bazar to the very heart of the Badaga villages.

First it is a bag of ragi (food grain), a piece of cloth to throw on the coffin, or a few rupees worth of rice and curry-stuff doled out by the all-accommodating Rowthan at a price out of all proportion to the market rate, and at a rate ranging from six pies to two annas for the rupee. The ever impecunious Badaga has no means of extricating himself, with a slender income, which leaves no margin for redeeming debts.





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The bond is renewed every quarter or half year, and the debt grows by leaps and bounds, and consumes all his earthly goods, including lands. The advent of lawyers on the hills has made the Badagas a most litigious people, and they resort to the courts, which means expenditure of money, and neglect of agriculture."

In the funeral songs of the Badagas, which has been translated by Mr. Gover,\* one of the crimes enumerated, for which atonement must be made, is that of preferring a complaint to the Sirkar (Government), and one of their numerous proverbs embodies the same idea. "If you prefer a complaint to a Magistrate, it is as if you had put poison into your adversary's food."

\* Folk-songs of Southern India.

But Mr. Grigg writes,\* "either the terrors of the Sirkar are not what they were, or this precept is much disregarded, for the Court-house at Ootacamund is constantly thronged with



**CLICK HERE**



Badagas, and they are now very much given to litigation."

\* Manual of the Nilapiri district

I gather from the notes, which Bishop Whitehead has kindly placed at my disposal, that "when the Badagas wish to take a very solemn oath, they go to the temple of **Mariamamma** at Sigur, and, after bathing in the stream and putting on only one cloth, offer fruits, cocoanuts, etc., and kill a sheep or fowl. They put the head of the animal on the step of the shrine, and make a line on the ground just in front of it. The person who is taking the oath then walks from seven feet off in seven steps, putting one foot immediately in front of the other, up to the line, crosses it, goes inside the shrine, and puts out a lamp that is burning in front of the image. If the oath is true, the man will walk without any difficulty straight to the shrine. But, if the oath is not true, his eyes will be blinded, and he will not be able to walk



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straight to the shrine, or see the lamp. It is a common saying among Badagas, when a man tells lies, ' Will you go to Sigur, and take an oath .

Oaths are taken in much the same way at the temple of Mariamma at Ootacamund. When a Hindu gives evidence in the Court at Ootacamund, he is often asked by the Judge whether he will take an oath at the Mariamma temple. If he agrees, he is sent off to the temple with a Court official. The party for whom he gives evidence supplies a goat or sheep, which is killed at the temple, the head and carcass being- placed in front of the image. The witness steps over the carcass, and this forms the oath. If the evidence is false, it is believed that some evil will happen to him."

The name Badaga or Vadugan means northerner, and the Badagas are believed to be descended from Canarese colonists from the Mysore country, who migrated to the Nilgiris three centuries ago owing to famine, political





turmoil, or local oppression in their own country. It is worthy of notice, in this connection, that the head of the Badagas, like that of the Todas and Kotas, is *dolichocephalic*, and not of the *mesaticephalic* or *sub-brachycephalic* type, which prevails throughout Mysore, as in other Canarese areas.

		Average.		
		Cephalic length.	Cephalic breadth.	Cephalic index.
		cm.	cm.	
Badaga	...	18·9	13·6	71·7
Toda	...	19·4	14·2	73·3
Kota	...	19·2	14·2	74·1

Of the Mysorean heads, the following are a few typical examples :

		Average.		
		Cephalic length.	Cephalic breadth.	Cephalic index.
		cm.	cm.	
Ganiga	...	18·5	14·3	77·6
Bēdar	...	18·3	14·3	77·7
Holeya	...	17·9	14·1	79·1
Mandya Brahman	...	18·5	14·8	80·2
Vakkaliga	...	17·7	14·5	81·7

Concerning the origin of the Badagas, the following legend is current. Seven brothers and their sisters were living on the Talamalai hills. A Muhammadan ruler attempted to ravish the girl, whom the brother saved from him by flight. They settled down near the present village of Bethalhada. After a short stay there, the



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brothers separated, and settled in different parts of the Nilgiris, which they peopled.

Concerning the second brother, Hethappa, who had two daughters, the story goes that, during his absence on one occasion, two Todas forced their way into his house, ravished his wife, and possessed themselves of his worldly effects. Hearing of what had occurred, Hethappa sought the assistance of two Balayaru in revenging himself on the Todas. They readily consented to help him, in return for a promise that they should marry his daughters. The Todas were killed, and the present inhabitants of the village Hulikallu are supposed to be the descendants of the Balayaru and Badaga girls. The seven brothers are now worshipped under the name Hethappa or Hetha.

In connection with the migration of the Badagas to the Nilgiris, the following note is given in the Gazetteer of the Nilgiris. “When this flitting took place there is little to show. It must



have occurred after the foundation of the Lingayat creed in the latter half of the twelfth century, as many of the Badagas are Lingayats by faith, and sometime before the end of the sixteenth century, since in 1602 the Catholic priests from the west coast found them settled on the south of the plateau, and observing much the same relations with the Todas as subsist to this day. The present state of our knowledge does not enable us to fix more nearly the date of the migration. That the language of the Badagas, which is a form of Canarese, should by now have so widely altered from its original as to be classed as a separate dialect argues that the movement took place nearer the twelfth than the sixteenth century.

On the other hand, the fact (pointed out by Dr. Rivers \*) that the Badagas **are not mentioned in a single one of the Todas' legends about their gods**, whereas the Kotas, Kurumbas, and Irulas, each play a part in one or





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more of these stories, raises the inference that the relations between the Badagas and the Todas are recent as compared with those between the other tribes.

\* The Todas, 1906.

A critical study of the Badaga dialect might perhaps serve to fix within closer limits the date of the migration. As now spoken, this tongue contains letters (two forms of r for instance) and numerous words, which are otherwise met with only in ancient books, and which strike most strangely upon the ear of the present generation of Canarese. The date when some of these letters and words became obsolete might possibly be traced, and thus aid in fixing the period when the Badagas left the low country.

It is known that the two forms of r, for example, had dropped out of use prior to the time of the grammarian **Kesiraja**, who lived in the thirteenth century, and that the word **betta** (a hill), which the Badagas use in place of the



modern bettu, is found in the thirteenth century work **Sabdamanidarpana**."

It is recorded, in the Gazetteer of the Nilgiris, that "**Nellialam**, about eight miles north-west of **Devala** as the crow flies, is the residence of the **Nellialam Arasu** (Urs), who has been recognised as the **janmi** (landlord) of a considerable area in the Munanad amsam, but is in reality a Canarese-speaking Lingayat of Canarese extraction, who follows the ordinary Hindu law of inheritance, and is not a native of the Wynad or of Malabar.

Family tradition, though now somewhat misty, says that in the beginning two brothers named Sadasiva Raja Urs and Bhujanga Raja Urs moved (at some date and for some reason not stated) from Ummattur (in the present Chamarajnagar taluk of Mysore), and settled at Malaikota, the old fort near Kalhatti. Their family deities were **Bhujangesvara** and **Ummattur Urakatti**, which are still worshipped as such. They brought with them a following of Bedars



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and Badagas, and thereafter always encouraged the immigration to the hills of more Canarese people.

The village of Bannimara, a mile west of Kalhatti, is still peopled by Bedars who are said to be descendants of people of that caste who came with the two brothers ; and to this day, when the Badagas of the plateau have disputes of difficulty, they are said to go down to Nellialam with presents (**kanikai**) in their hands, and ask the Arasu to settle their differences, while, at the time of their periodical ceremonies (**manavalai**) to the memory of their ancestors, they send a deputation to Nellialam to invite representatives of the Arasu to be present."

Close to the village of Bethalhada is a row of cromlechs carved with figures of the sun and moon, human beings, animals, etc., and enclosed within a stone kraal, which the Badagas claim to be the work of their ancestors, to whom periodical offerings are made. At the time of my visit, there were within one of the





cromlechs a conch shell, lingam, bell, and flowers. A number of these sculptured cromlechs at Sholur, Melur, and other spots on the Nilgiris, are described and figured by Breeks,\* who records that the cromlech at Jakata Kambe is interesting as being the place of the yearly sacrifice performed by the Badagas of the Jakaneri grama (village) by their **Kani Kurumba**.



And he adds that the Badagas would seem to have usually selected the neighbourhood of these cromlechs for their temples, as for example, at Melur, Kakusi, H'laiuru, Tudur, and Jakatada.

It is recorded \*, in connection with the legends of the Badagas, that "in the heart of the **Banagudi shola**, not far from the Dodduru group of cromlechs, is an odd little shrine to **Karairaya**,



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consisting of a ruined stone hut surrounded by a low wall, within which are a tiny cromlech, some sacred water-worn stones, and sundry little pottery images representing a tiger, a mounted man, and some dogs. These keep in memory, it is said, a Badaga who was slain in combat with a tiger ; and annually a festival is held, at which new images are placed there, and vows are paid.

\* Gazetteer of the Nilgiris.

A Kurumba makes fire by friction and burns incense, throws sanctified water over the numerous goats brought to be sacrificed, to see if they will shiver in the manner always held necessary in sacrificial victims, and then slays, one after the other, those which have shown themselves duly qualified.

Hulikal Drug, usually known as the Drug, is a precipitous bluff at the very end of the range which borders on the south the great ravine which runs up to Coonoor. It is named from the



neighbouring village of Hulikal, or tiger's stone, and the story goes that this latter is so called because in it a Badaga killed a notorious man-eater which had long been the terror of the country side. The spot where the beast was buried is shown near the Pillaiyar temple to the south of Hulikal village, and is marked by three stones.

Burton says there used formerly to be a stone image of the slain tiger thereabouts. Some two miles south-east of Konakarai in a place known as Kottai-hada, or the fort flat, lie the remains of the old fort **Udaiya Raya Kota**.

Badaga tradition gives a fairly detailed account of Udaiya Raya. It says he was a chief who collected the taxes for the Ummattur Rajas, and that he had also a fort at **Kullanthorai**, near Sirumugai, the remains of which are still to be seen. He married a woman of Netlingi hamlet of Nedugula, named Muddu Gavari, but she died by the wrath of the gods because she persuaded him to celebrate the annual fire-





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walking festival in front of the fort, instead of at the customary spot by the Mahalingasvami temple about half a mile off.

Anaikatti is a hamlet situated in the jungle of the Moyar valley. The stream which flows past it tumbles over a pretty fall on the slopes of **Birmukku** (Bimaka) hill. The Badagas call the spot **Kuduraihallo**, or the ravine of the horse, and say the name was given it because a Badaga, covered with shame at finding that his wife gave him first sort rice but his brother who lived with them only second sort, committed suicide by jumping his horse down the fall."

According to Mr. Grigg, the Badagas recognise eighteen different "castes or sects." These are, however, simplified by Mr. S. M. Natesa Sastri \* into six, "five high castes and one low caste." They are:



- |               |   |             |
|---------------|---|-------------|
| 1. Udaya.     | } | High caste. |
| 2. Hāruva.    |   |             |
| 3. Adhikāri.  |   |             |
| 4. Kanaka.    |   |             |
| 5. Badaga.    |   |             |
| 6. Toreya ... |   | Low caste.  |

Madras Christian College Magazine, 1892.

Udayas are Lingayats in religion, and carry the Sivalinga—the Siva image—tied round their necks. They claim to be superior to all the other Badagas, and are regarded as such. They are priests to all the Badagas of the Lingayat class, and are strict vegetarians. They do not intermarry with any of the other high caste Badaga sects. Udaya was, and is the title assumed by the **Maisur Rajas**, and those Badagas, by being thus designated as a caste, claim superior blood in their veins."

The Lingayat Badagas are commonly called Lingakutti.



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"Next in rank come the **Haruvas**. From their name being so closely connected with the Aryas—the respectable—and from their habit of wearing the Brahmanical thread, we are warranted in believing that they must originally have been the poor Brahman priests of the Badagas that migrated to this country (the Nilgiris), though they have now got themselves closely mingled with the Badagas. These Haruvas are also strict vegetarians, and act as priests."

It has been suggested that the Haruvas (jumper) derive their name from the fire-walking ceremony, which they perform periodically. A further, and more probable suggestion has been made to me that Haruva comes from a Canarese word meaning to beg or pray ; hence one who begs or prays, and so a Brahman. The Canarese **Basava Purana** frequently uses the word in sense.



"The Adhikaris are to a





certain extent vegetarians. The other two high castes, and of course the low caste **Toreyas** also, have no objection of any kind to eating flesh. It is also said that the vegetarian **Adhikari**, if he marries into a flesh-eating caste of the Badagas, betakes himself to this latter very readily."

The Kanakas are stated by Mr. Grigg to be the accountants, who were probably introduced when the hills were under the sway of the Tamil chiefs. This would, however, seem to be very improbable. "The Toreyas are regarded as sons and servants to the five high caste Badaga sects—to the Haruvas especially. They are the lowest in the scale, and they are prohibited from intermarrying with the other or high caste Badagas, as long as they are sons to them."

The Toreya does the menial duties for the tribe. He is the village servant, carries the corpses to the burning-ground, conveys the news of a death from village to village, is the first to get shaved when a death occurs, and is



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sent along with a woman when she is going to visit her mother or mother-in-law at a distance from her own home.

"The Udayas, Adhikaris and Kanakas are Lingayats in religion, and the other three, the Haruvas, Badagas, and Toreyas are Saivites." Of the six divisions referred to, the Udayas and Toreyas are endogamous, but intermarriage is permissible between the other four. At the census, 1891, a large number of Badagas returned as their sub-division **Vakkaliga**, which means cultivator, and is the name of the great cultivating caste of Mysore. Seven miles west of Coonoor is a village named Athikarihatti, or village of the Athikari or Adhikari section of the Badagas."

The story goes that these people, under a leader named **Karibetta Raya**, came from **Sarigur** in Mysore territory, and settled first at Nelliturai (a short distance south-west of **Mettupalaiyam**) and afterwards at Tudur (on the plateau west of Kulakambi) and



Tadasimarahatti (to the north-west of Melur), and that it was they who erected the sculptured cromlechs of Tudur and Melur.

Tudur and Tadasimarahatti are now both deserted; but in the former a cattle kraal, an old shrine, and a pit for fire-walking may still be seen, and in the latter another **kraal**, and one of the raised stone platforms called **mandaikallu** by the Badagas. Tradition says that the Badagas left these places and founded Athikarihatti and its hamlets instead, because the Kurumbas round about continually troubled them with their magic arts, and indeed killed by sorcery several of their most prominent citizens."\*

\* Gazetteer of the Nilgiris.

Like other Canarese people, the Badagas have exogamous septs or kolas, of which Mari, Madhave (marriage). Kasturi (musk), and Belli (silver) are examples. A very large number of families belong to the Mari and Madhave septs,





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which were time after time given as the sept name in reply to my enquiries. It may be noted that Belli occurs as an exogamous sept of the Canarese classes Vakkaliga, Toreya, and Kuruba, and Kasturi is recorded in my notes as a sept of the Vakkaligas and Telugu Kammas.

The Badagas dwell in extensive villages, generally situated on the summit of a low hillock, composed of rows of comfortable thatched or tiled houses, and surrounded by the fields, which yield the crops. The houses are not separate tenements, but a line of dwellings under one continuous roof, and divided by party walls. Sometimes there are two or three, or more lines, forming streets. Each house is partitioned off into an outer (**edumane**) and inner apartment (**ozhaga** or **ogamane**).

If the family has cows or buffaloes yielding milk, a portion of the latter is converted into a milkhouse (hagottu), in which the milk is stored, and which no woman may enter. Even males who are under pollution, from having touched or



passed near a Kota or Paraiyan, or other cause, may not enter it until they have had a ceremonial bath. To some houses a loft, made of bamboo posts, is added, to serve as a storehouse. In every Badaga village there is a raised platform composed of a single boulder or several stones with an erect stone slab set up thereon, called **suththu kallu**. There is, further, a platform, made of bricks and mud, called **mandhe kallu**, whereon the Badagas, when not working, sit at ease.

In their folk-tales men seated thereon are made to give information concerning the approach of strangers to the village. Strangers, who are not Badagas, are called Holeyas. The Rev. G. Richter gives\* Badaga Holeyas as a division of the lowly Holeyas, who came to Coorg from the Mysore country. In front of the houses, the operations of drying and threshing grain are carried out. The cattle are kept in stone kraals, or covered sheds close to the habitations, and the litter is kept till it is knee or



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waist deep, and then carried away as manure for the Badaga's land, or planters' estates.

\* Manual of Coorg.

"Nobody," it has been said,\* "can beat the Badaga at making mother earth produce to her utmost capacity, unless it be a Chinese gardener. To-day we see a portion of the hill side covered with rocks and boulders. The Badagas become possessed of this scene of chaos, and turn out into the place in hundreds, reducing it, in a few weeks, to neat order. The unwieldy boulders, having been rolled aside, serve their purpose by being turned into a wall to keep out cattle, etc. The soil is pounded and worried until it becomes amenable to reason, and next we see a green crop running in waves over the surface. The Badagas are the most progressive of all the hill tribes, and always willing to test any new method of cultivation, or new crops brought to their notice by the Nilgiri Horticultural Society."





\* Pioneer, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1907.

Writing in 1832, Harkness states\* that "on leaving his house in the morning the Burgher pays his adoration to the god of day, proceeds to the tu-el or yard, in which the cattle have been confined, and, again addressing the sun as the emblem of Siva, asks his blessing, and liberates the herd. He allows the cattle to stray about in the neighbourhood of the village, on a piece of ground which is always kept for this purpose, and, having performed his morning ablutions, commences the milking. This is also preceded by further salutations and praises to the sun. On entering the house in the evening, the Burgher addresses the lamp, now the only light, or visible emblem of the deity.

\* Description of a singular Aboriginal Race inhabiting the summit of the Neilgherry Hills.

'Thou, creator of this and of all worlds, the greatest of the great, who art with us, as well in



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the mountain as in the wilderness, who keepeth the wreaths that adorn the head from fading, who guardeth the foot from the thorn, God, among a hundred, may we be prosperous.' "

The Badaga understands the rotation of crops well. On his land he cultivates bearded wheat (beer ganji), barley, onions, garlic, potatoes, kire (*Amarantus*), samai, (*Paniaim miliare*), tenai (*Setaria italica*), etc.

"Among the Badagas," Mr. Natesa Sastri writes, "the position of the women is somewhat different from what it is among most peoples. Every Badaga has a few acres to cultivate, but he does not mainly occupy himself with them, for his wife does all the out-door farm work, while he is engaged otherwise in earning something in hard cash. To a Badaga, therefore, his wife is his capital. Her labour in the field is considered to be worth one rupee per day, while an average male Badaga earns merely three annas. A Badaga woman, who has not her own acres to cultivate, finds work on



some other lands. She thus works hard for her husband and family, and is quite content with the coarsest food—the koralī (*Setaria italica*) flour—leaving the better food to the male members of the family.

“This fact, and the hard work the Badaga women have to perform, may perhaps account to some extent for the slight build of the Badagas as a race. The male Badaga, too, works in the field, or at his own craft if he is not a cultivator, but his love for ready cash is always so great that, even if he had a harvest to gather the next morning, he would run away as a cooly for two annas wages.”

Further, Mr. Grigg states that "as the men constantly leave their villages to work on coffee plantations, much of the labour in their own fields, as well as ordinary household work, is performed by the women. They are so industrious, and their services of such value to their husbands, that a Badaga sometimes pays 150 or 200 rupees as dowry for his wife."





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In the off season for cultivation, I am informed, the Badaga woman collects faggots for home consumption, and stores them near her house, and the women prepare the fields for cultivation by weeding, breaking the earth, and collecting manure.

In his report on the revenue settlement of the Nilgiris (1885), Mr. (now Sir) R. S. Benson notes that "concurrently with the so-called abolition of the **bhurty** (or shifting) system of cultivation, Mr. Grant abolished the peculiar system in vogue up to that time in Kundahnad, which had been transferred from Malabar to the Nilgiris in 1860. This system was known as **erkadu kothukadu**. Under it, a tax of Re. 1 to Re. 1-8-0 was levied for the right to use a plough or **er**, and a tax of from 4 to 8 annas was levied for the right to use a hoe or **kothu**. The so-called **patta** issued to the ryot under this system was really no more than a license to use one or more hoes, as the case might be. It merely specified the amount payable for each instrument, but in no cases



was the extent or position of the lands to be cultivated specified.

“The ryot used his implements whenever and wherever he pleased. No restrictions, even on the felling of forests, were imposed, so that the hill-sides and valleys were cleared at will. The system was abolished in 1862. But, during the settlement, I found this **erkadu kothukadu** system still in force in the flourishing Badaga village of Kinnakorai, with some fifty houses.”

In connection with the local self-government of the Badagas, Mr. A. Rajah Bahadur Mudaliar writes to me as follows. “In former days, the **monegar** was a great personage, as he formed the unit of the administration. The appointment was more or less hereditary, and it generally fell to the lot of the richest and most well-to-do. All disputes within his jurisdiction were placed before him, and his decision was accepted as final. In simple matters, such as partition of property, disputes between husband and wife, etc., the monegars themselves disposed of



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them. But, when questions of a complicated nature presented themselves, they took as their colleagues other people of the villages, and the disputes were settled by the collective wisdom of the village elders. They assembled at a place set apart for the purpose beneath a nim (*Melia Azadirachta*) or pipal tree (*Ficus religiosa*) on a raised platform (ratchai), generally situated at the entrance to the village. The monegar was *ex-officio* president of such councils. He and the committee had power to fine the parties, to excommunicate them, and to re-admit them to the caste.

Parents resorted to the monegar for counsel in the disposal of their daughters in marriage, and in finding brides for their sons. If anyone had the audacity to run counter to the wishes of the monegar in matters matrimonial, he had the power to throw obstacles in the way of such marriages taking place. The monegar, in virtue of his position, wielded much power, and ruled the village as he pleased."





In the old days, it is said, when he visited any village within his jurisdiction, the monegar had the privilege of having the best women or maids of the place to share his cot according to his choice. In former times, the monegar used to wear a silver ring as the badge of office, and some Badagas still have in their possession such rings, which are preserved as heirlooms, and worshipped during festivals. The term monegar is, at the present day, used for the village revenue official and munsiff.

I gather that each exogamous sept has its headman, called Gouda, who is assisted by a **Parpattikaran**, and decides tribal matters, such as disputes, divorce, etc. Fines, when inflicted, go towards feasting the tribe, and doing puja (worship) to the gods. In the case of a dispute between two parties, one challenges the other to take an oath in a temple before the village council. A declaration on oath settles the matter at issue, and the parties agree to abide by it. It is the duty of the Parpattikaran to make



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arrangements for such events as the **Heththeswami**, **Devve** and **Bairaganni** festivals, and the buffalo sacrificing festival at **Konakkore**.

The Parpattikaran takes part in the purification of excommunicated members of the tribe, when they are received back into it, for example, on release from prison. **The tongue of the delinquent is burnt with a hot sandal stick**, and a new waist thread put on. He is taken to the temple, where he stands amidst the assembled Badagas, who touch his head with a cane. He then prostrates himself at the feet of the Parpattikaran, who smears his forehead with sacred ashes. It is, further, the duty of the Parpattikaran to be present on the occasion of the **Kannikattu** (pregnancy) ceremony.

A quarter of a century ago, a Badaga could be at once picked out from the other tribes of the Nilgiris by his wearing a turban. But, in the present advanced age, not only does the Toda sometimes appear in the national head-dress, but even Irulas and Kurumbas, who only a short



time ago were buried in the jungles, living like pigs and bears on roots, honey and other forest produce, turn up on Sundays in the Kotagiri bazar, clad in turban and coat of English cut. And, as the less civilised tribes don the turban, so the college student abandons this picturesque form of head-gear in favour of the less becoming and less washable porkpie cap, while the Badaga men and youths glory in a knitted night-cap of flaring red or orange hue.

The body of the Badaga man is covered by a long body-cloth, sometimes with red and blue stripes, wrapped “so loosely that, as a man works in the fields, he is obliged to stop between every few strokes of his hoe, to gather up his cloth, and throw one end over his shoulder.”

Male adornment is limited to gold ear-rings of a special pattern made by **Kotas** or goldsmiths, a silver waist-thread, silver bangle on the wrist, and silver, copper, or brass rings. The women wear a white body-cloth, a white under-cloth





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tied round the chest, tightly wrapped square across the breasts, and reaching to the knees, and a white cloth worn like a cap on the head. As types of female jewellery and tattooing, the following examples may be cited : —

1. Tattooed on forehead with dashes, circles and crescent ; spot on chin ; double row of dots on each upper arm over deltoid ; and devices and double row of dots on right forearm. Gold ornament in left nostril. Necklets of glass beads and silver links with four-anna piece pendent. Silver armlet above right elbow. Four copper armlets above left elbow. Four silver and seven composition bangles on left forearm. Two silver rings on right ring-finger ; two steel rings on left ring-finger.

2. Tattooed on forehead; quadruple row of dots over right deltoid ; star on right forearm.

3. Tattooed like the preceding on forehead and upper arm. Spot on chin ; elaborate



device on right forearm ; rayed star or sun on back of hand.

4. Tattooed like the preceding on forehead and arm. Triple row of dots on back and front of left wrist, and double row of dots, with circle surrounded by dots, across chest.

Toreya women are only allowed to wear bangles on the wrist. The tattoo marks on the foreheads of Udayar women consist of a crescent and dot, and they have a straight line tattooed at the outer corners of the eyes. Women of the other sub-divisions have on the forehead two circles with two vertical dashes between them, and a horizontal or crescentic dash below.

The circles are made by pricking in the pigment over an impression m.ade with a finger ring, or over a black mark made by means of such a ring. The operation is performed either by a Badaga or Korava woman. The former uses as needles the spines of *Carissa spinarum*, and a mixture of finely powdered



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charcoal or lamp-black mixed with rice gruel. The marks on the forehead are made when a girl is about eight or nine years old, and do not, as stated by Mr. Xatesa Sastri. proclaim to the whole Badaga world that a girl is of marriageable age.

In colour the Badagas are lighter than the other hill tribes, and the comparative pallor of the skin is specially noticeable in the females, whom, with very few exceptions, I was only able to study by surreptitious examination, when we met on the roads.

In physique, the typical Badaga man is below middle height, smooth-skinned, of slender build, with narrow chest and shoulders. Badaga men have cicatrices on the shoulder and forearm as the result of branding with a fire-stick when they are lads, with the object, it is said, of giving strength, and preventing pain when milking or churning. In like manner, the Todas have raised cicatrices (**keloids**) on the shoulder produced by branding with a fire-stick. They believe that the





branding enables them to milk the buffaloes with perfect ease. The Badagas have a very extensive repertoire of **hora hesaru**, or nicknames, of which the following are examples :

One who eats in bed during the night.	Bad-tempered.
Left-handed.	Snorer.
Buffalo grazer.	Stupid.
Saliva dribbling.	Bald head.
Honey-eater.	Brown-eyed.
Black	Thin and bony.



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Spleen.	Big head.
Teeth.	Bandy-legged.
Potato-eater.	One who returned alive from the burning ground.
Glutton.	Belly.
Ripe fruit.	Itch-legged.
Big-thighed.	Blind.
One who was slow in learning to walk.	Lame.
Tall.	Big calves.
Thief-	Piles.



eyed.	
Pustule-bodied.	Liar.
Scarred.	Cat-eyed.
Hairy.	Fond of pot-herbs
Weak, like partially baked pots.	Rheumatic.
Strong, like portland cement.	

Among the Badagas, **Konga** is used as a term of abuse. Those who made mistakes in matching Holmgren's wools, with which I tested them, were, always called Konga by the onlookers.

When two Badagas meet each other, the





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elder touches the head of the younger with his right hand. This form of salutation is known as giving- the head. A person of the Badaga section gives the head, as it is called, to an Udaiyar, in token of the superiority of the latter. When people belong to the same sept, they say "*Ba, anna, appa, thamma, amma, akka* " (come, father, brother, mother, sister, etc.). But, if they are of different septs, they will say "*Ba, mama, mami, bava*" (come, uncle, aunt, brother-in-law, etc.).

"Whenever," Dr. Rivers writes,\* "a Toda meets a Badaga monegar (headman), or an old Badaga with whom he is acquainted, a salutation passes between the two. The Toda stands before the Badaga, inclines his head slightly, and says ' Madtin pudia.' (Madtin, you have come). The Badaga replies 'Buthuk! buthuk!' (blessing, blessing), and rests his hand on the top of the Toda's head. This greeting only takes place between Todas and the more important of the Badaga community.



\* The Todas, 1906.

“It would seem that every Badaga headman maybe greeted in this way, but a Toda will only greet other Badaga elders, if he is already acquainted with them. The salutation is made to members of all the various castes of the Badagas, except the Toreyas. It has been held to imply that the Todas regard the Badagas as their superiors, but it is doubtful how far this is the case. The Todas themselves say they follow the custom because the Badagas help to support them. It seems to be a mark of respect paid by the Todas to the elders of a tribe with which they have very close relations, and it is perhaps significant that no similar sign of respect is shown to Toda elders by the Badagas.”

Every Badaga family has its **Muttu Kota**, from whom it gets the agricultural implements, pots, hoes, etc. In return, the Kotas receive an annual present of food-grains, mustard and potatoes.



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For a Kota funeral, the Badagas have to give five rupees or a quantity of rice, and a buffalo. The pots obtained from the Kotas are not used immediately, but kept for three days in the jungle, or in a bush in some open spot. They are then taken to the outer apartment of the house, and kept there for three days, when they are smeared with the bark of *Meliosina pungens* (the tud tree of the Todas) and culms of *Andropogon Schænanthus* (*bzambe hullu*). Thus purified, the pots are used for boiling water in for three days, and may then be used for any purpose. The Badagas are said to give a present of grain annually to the Todas.

Every Toda mand (or mad) seems to have its own group of Badaga families, who pay them this **gudu**, as it is called. "There are," Dr. Rivers writes, "several regulations concerning the food of the **palol** (dairy-man of a Toda sacred dairy). Any grain he eats must be that provided by the Badagas. At the present time more rice is eaten than was formerly the case. This is not grown





by the Badagas, but nevertheless the rice for the palol must be obtained through them. The palol wears garments of a dark grey material made in the Coimbatore district. They are brought to the palol by the Badaga called *tikelfmav*. The earthenware vessels of the inner room (of the **ti** dairy) are not obtained from the Kotas, like the ordinary vessels, but are made by Hindus, and are procured through the Badagas."

The Badagas live in dread of the Kurumbas, and the Kurumba constantly comes under reference in their folk-stories. The Kurumba is the **necromancer** of the hills, and believed to be possessed of the power of outraging women, removing their livers, and so causing their death, while the wound heals by magic, so that no trace of the operation is left. He is supposed, too, to have the power of opening the bolts of doors by magic and effecting an entrance into a house at night for some nefarious purpose.

The Toda or Badaga requires the services of



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the Kurumba, when he fancies that any member of his family is possessed of the devil, or when he wants to remove the evil eye, to which he imagines that his children have been subjected. The Kurumba does his best to remove the malady by repeating various mantrams (magical formulæ).

If he fails, and if any suspicion is aroused in the mind of the Toda or Badaga that he is allowing the devil to play his pranks instead of loosing his hold on the supposed victim, woe betide him. The wrath of the entire village, or even the whole tribe, is raised against the unhappy Kurumba. His hut is surrounded at night, and the entire household massacred in cold blood, and their huts set on fire. This is very cleverly carried out, and the isolated position of the Kurumba settlements allows of very little clue for identification.

In 1835 no less than fifty-eight Kurumbas were thus murdered, and a smaller number in 1875 and 1882. In 1891 the live inmates of a



single hut were murdered, and their hut burnt to ashes, because, it was said, one of them who had been treating a sick Badaga child failed to cure it. The crime was traced to some Kotas in conjunction with Badagas, **but the District Judge disbelieved the evidence**, and all who were charged were acquitted.

Every Badaga family pays an annual tax of four annas to the Kurumbas, and, if a Kurumba comes to a Badaga **hatti** (village), a subscription is raised as an inducement to him to take his departure. The Kurumba receives a fee for every Badaga funeral, and for the pregnancy ceremony (kannikattu).

It is noted by Dr. Rivers that “the Toda sorcerers are not only feared by their fellow Todas, but also by the Badagas, and it is probably largely owing to fear of Toda sorcery that the Badagas continue to pay their tribute of grain. The Badagas may also consult the Toda diviners, and it is probable that the belief of the Badagas in the magical powers of the Todas is





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turned to good account by the latter. In some cases, Todas, have been killed by Badagas owing to this belief."

Among the Todas, the duties of milking the buffaloes and dairy-work are entrusted to special individuals, whereas any Badaga male may, after initiation, milk the cows and buffaloes, provided that he is free from pollution.

Every Badaga boy, when he is about seven or nine years old, is made to milk a cow on an auspicious day, or on new year's day. The ceremony is thus described by Mr. Natesa Sastri. "Early in the morning of the day appointed for this ceremony, the boy is bathed, and appears in his holiday dress. A she-buffalo, with her calf, stands before his house, waiting to be milked. The parents, or other elder relations of the boy, and those who have been invited to be present on the occasion, or whose duty it is to be present, then conduct the boy to the spot. The father, or some one of the [agnatic](#) kindred, gives into the hands of the boy a bamboo



vessel called hone, which is already very nearly full of fresh-drawn milk. The boy receives the vessel with both his hands, and is conducted to the buffalo. The elder relations show him the process, and the boy, sitting down, milks a small quantity into the hone. This is his first initiation into the duty of milking, and it is that he may not commit mistakes on the very first day of his milking that the hone is previously filled almost to the brim.

“The boy takes the vessel filled with milk into his house, and pours some of the sacred fluid into all his household eating vessels—a sign that from that day he has taken up on himself the responsibility of supplying the family with milk. He also throws some milk in the faces of his parents and relatives. They receive it very kindly, and bless him, and request him to continue thus to milk the buffaloes, and bring plenty and prosperity to the house. After this, the boy enters the milk-house (**hagottu**), and places milk in his hone there. From this



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moment, and all through his life, he may enter into that room, and this is therefore considered a very important ceremony."

A cow or buffalo, which has calved for the first time, has to be treated in a special manner. For three or five days it is not milked. A boy is then selected to milk it. He must not sleep on a mat, or wear a turban, and, instead of tying his cloth round his waist, must wear it loosely over his body. Meat is forbidden, and he must avoid, and not speak to polluting classes, such as Irulas and Kotas, and menstruating women.

On the day appointed for milking the animal, the boy bathes, and proceeds to milk it into a new hone purified by smearing a paste of *Meliosma* (tud) leaves and bark over it, and heating it over a fire. The milk is taken to a stream, where three cups are made of *Argyreia* (minige) leaves, into which a small quantity of the milk is placed. The cups are then put in the water. The remainder of the milk in the hone is also poured into the stream. In some places,





especially where a Madeswara temple is close at hand, the milk is taken to the temple, and given to the pujari.

With a portion of the milk some plantain fruits are made into a pulp, and given to an **Udaya**, who throws them into a stream. The boy is treated with some respect by his family during the period when he milks the animal, and is given food first. This he must eat off a plate made of *Argvreja*, or plantain leaves.

Besides the hagottu within the house, the Badagas have, at certain places, separate dairy-houses near a temple dedicated to **Heththeswami**, of which the one at **Bairaganni** (or Berganni) appears to be the most important.

The dairy pujari is here, like the Toda palol, a celibate. In 1905, he was a young lad, whom my Brahman assistant set forth to photograph. He was, however, met at a distance from the village by a headman, who assured him that he could not take the photograph without the sanction of fifteen villages. The pujari is not allowed to



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wander freely about the village, or talk to grown-up women. He cooks his own food within the temple grounds, and wears his cloth thrown loosely over his body.

Once a year, on the occasion of a festival, he is presented with new cloths and turban, which alone he may wear. He must be a strict vegetarian. A desire to marry and abandon the priesthood is believed to be conveyed in dreams, or through one inspired. Before leaving the temple service, he must train his successor in the duties, and retires with the gains acquired by the sale of the products of the herd and temple offerings. The village of Bairaganni is regarded as sacred, and possesses no **holagudi** (menstrual hut).

Bishop Whitehead adds that "buffaloes are given as offerings to the temple at Bairaganni, and become the property of the pujari, who milks them, and uses the milk for his food. All the villagers give him rice every day. He may only eat once a day, at about 3 p.m. He cooks



the meal himself, and empties the rice from the cooking-pot by turning it over once. If the rice does not come out the first time, he cannot take it at all. When he wants to get married, another boy is appointed in his place. The buffaloes are handed over to his successor."

The following legend in connection with Bairaganni is also recorded by Bishop Whitehead. "There is a village in the Mekanad division of the Nilgiris called **Nundala**. A man had a daughter. He wanted to marry her to a man in the Paranganad division about a hundred years ago. She did not wish to marry him. The father insisted, but she refused again and again. At last she wished to die, and came near a tank, on the bank of which was a tree. She sat under the tree and washed, and then threw herself into the tank. One of the men of Bairaganni in the Paranganad division saw the woman in a dream. She told him that she was not a human being but a goddess, an incarnation of Parvati. The people of Nundala





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built a strong bund (embankment) round the tank, and allow no woman to go on it. Only the pujari, and Badagas who have prepared themselves by fasting and ablution, are allowed to go on the bund to offer puja, which is done by breaking cocoanuts, and offering rice, flowers, and fruits. The woman told the man in his dream to build a temple at Bairaganni, which is now the chief temple of Heththeswami."

Concerning the initiation of a Lingayat Badaga into his religion, which takes place at about his thirteenth birthday, Mr. Natesa Sastri writes as follows. "The priest conducts this ceremony, and the elder relations of the family have only to arrange for the performance of it. The priests belong to the Udaya sect. They live in their own villages, and are specially sent for, and come to the boy's village for the occasion. The ceremony is generally done to several boys of about the same age on the same day. On the day appointed, all the people in the Badaga village, where this ceremony is to take place,



observe a strict fast. The cows and buffaloes are all milked very early in the morning, and not a drop of the milk thus collected is given out, or taken by even the tenderest children of the village, who may require it very badly. The Udaya priest arrives near the village between 10 a.m. and noon on the day appointed. He never goes into the village, but stops near some rivulet adjacent to it. The relations of the boy approach him with a new basket, containing five measures of uncooked rice, pulse, ghi, etc., and a quarter of a rupee—one fanam, as it is generally designated. The priest sits near the water-course, and lights a fire on the bank. Perfumes are thrown profusely into it, and this is almost the only ceremony before the fire. The boys, whose turn it is to receive the linga that day, are all directed to bathe in the river. A plantain leaf, cut into one foot square, is placed in front of the fire towards the east of it. The lingas, kept in readiness by the parents of the boys, are now received by the priest, and



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placed on the leaves. The boys are asked to wash them—each one the linga meant for his wearing—in water and milk. Then comes the time for the expenditure of all the collected milk of the morning. Profusely the white fluid is poured, till the whole rivulet is nothing but a stream of milk. After the lingas are thus washed, the boys give them to the priest, who places them in his left palm, and, covering them with his right, utters, with all the solemnity due to the occasion, the following incantation, while the boys and the whole village assembled there listen to it with the most profound respect and veneration ' Oh ! Siva, Hara, Basava, the Lord of all the six thousand and three thousand names and glories, the Lord of one lakh and ninety-six thousand ganas (body-guards of Siva), the donor of water, the daily-to-be worshipped, the husband of Parvati. Oh ! Lord, O ! Siva Linga, thy feet alone are our resort. Oh ! Siva, Siva, Siva, Siva.'

While pronouncing this prayer, the priest now





and then removes his right palm, and pours water and milk round the sacred fire, and over the lingas resting in his left palm. He then places each of the lingas in a cloth of one cubit square, rolls it up, and requests the boys to hold out their right palms. The young Badaga receives it, repeats the prayer given about five times, and, during each repetition, the palm holding the linga tied up in the cloth is carried nearer and nearer to his neck. When that is reached (on the fifth utterance of the incantation), the priest ties the ends of the rolled up cloth containing the Siva emblem loosely round the boy's neck, while the latter is all the while kneeling down, holding with both his hands the feet of the priest.

After the linga has been tied, the priest blesses him thus : ' May one become one thousand to you. May you ever preserve in you the Siva Linga. If you do so, you will have plenty of milk and food, and you will prosper for one thousand years in name and fame, kine and



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coin.'

If more than one have to receive the linga on the same day, each of them has to undergo this ceremony. After the ceremony is over, the priest returns to his village with the rice, etc., and fees. Every house, in which a boy has received the linga, has to give a grand feast on that day. Even the poorest Badaga must feed at least five other Badagas."

The foregoing account of the investiture with the lingam apparently applies to the **Mekanad Udayas**. The following note is based on information supplied by the Udayas of Paranginad.

The ceremony of investiture is performed either on new year's day or Sivarathri by an Udaya priest in the house of a respected member of the community (**doddamane**), which is vacated for the occasion. The houses of the boys and girls who are to receive lingams are cleaned, and festoons of tud and mango leaves, lime fruits, and flowers of *Leucas aspera*



(thumbe) are tied across the doorways, and in front of the house where the ceremony is to be performed. Until the conclusion thereof, all the people of the village fast. The candidates, with their parents, and the officiating priest repair to the doddamane.

The lingams are handed over to the priest, who, taking them up one by one, does puja to them, and gives them to the children. They in turn do puja, and the lingams, wrapped in pink silk or cotton cloths, are tied round their necks. The puja consists of washing the lingams in cow's urine and milk, smearing them with sandal and turmeric paste, throwing flowers on them, and waving incense and burning camphor before them.

After the investiture, the novices are taught a prayer, which is not a stereotyped formula, but varies with the priest and village.

Like other Lingayats, the Udayas respect the Jangam, but do not employ the **Jangama thirtham** (water used for washing the Jangam's





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feet) for bathing their lingams.

In Udaya villages there is no special menstrual hut (holagudi). Milk is not regarded by them as a sacred product, so there is no hagottu in their houses. Nor do they observe the **Manavalai** festival in honour of ancestors. Other ceremonies are celebrated by them, as by other Badagas, but they do not employ the services of a Kurumba.

Important agricultural ceremonies are performed by the Badagas at the time of sowing and harvest. The seed-sowing ceremony takes place in March, and, in some places, e.g., the **Mekanad** and **Paranginad**, a Kurumba plays an important part in it. On an auspicious day—a Tuesday before the crescent moon—a pujari of the Devve temple sets out several hours before dawn with five or seven kinds of grain in a basket and sickle, accompanied by a Kurumba, and leading a pair of bullocks with a plough. On reaching the field selected, the pujari pours the grain into the cloth of the Kurumba, and, yoking



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the animals to the plough, makes three furrows in the soil.

The Kurumba, stopping the bullocks, kneels on the ground between the furrows facing east. Removing his turban, he places it on the ground, and, closing his ears with his palms, bawls out " Dho, Dho," thrice. He then rises, and scatters the grain thrice on the soil. The pujari and Kurumba then return to the village, and the

former deposits what remains of the grain in the store-room (**attu**).

A new pot, full of water, is placed in the milk-house, and the pujari

dips his right hand therein, saying "**Nerathubitta**" (it is full).

This ceremony is an important one for the Badagas, as, until it has been performed, sowing may not commence. It is a day of feasting, and, in addition to rice, **Dolichos Lablah** is cooked.

The other agricultural ceremony is called **Devve habba** or *tenai* (*Setaria italica*), and is



BADAGA TEMPLE



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usually celebrated in June or July, always on a Monday. It is apparently performed in honour of the two gods Mahalingaswami and **Hiriya Udaya**, to whom a group of villages will have temples dedicated.

For example, the Badagas in the neighbourhood of Kotagiri have their Hiriya Udaya temple at Tandnad, and Mahalingaswami temple at Kannermukkii. This Devve festival, **which should on no account be pronounced duvve**, which means burning-ground, is celebrated at one place, whither the Badagas from other villages proceed, to take part in it. About midday, some Badagas and the temple pujari go from the temple of Hiriya Udaya to that of Mahalingaswami. The procession is usually headed by a Kurumba, who scatters fragments of tud bark and wood as he goes on his way. The pujari takes with him the materials necessary for doing puja, and, after worshipping Mahalingaswami, the party return to the **Hiriya Udaya** temple, where milk





and cooked rice are offered to the various gods within the temple precincts.

On the following day, all assemble at the temple, and a Kurumba brings a few sheaves of *Setaria italica*, and ties them to a stone set up at the main entrance. After this, puja is done, and the people offer cocoanuts to the god.

Later on, all the women of the **Madhave** sept, who have given birth to a first-born child, come, dressed up in holiday attire, with their babies, to the temple. On this day they wear a special nose ornament, called **elemukkuththi**, which is only worn on one other occasion, at the funeral of a husband. The women do puja to Hiriya Udaya, and the pujari gives them a small quantity of rice on minige (*Argyrcia*) leaves. After eating this, they leave the temple in a line, and wash their hands with water given to them by the pujari. This ceremonial, performed by women of the Madhave sept, is called **Mandedhanda**. As soon as the Devve festival is concluded, the reaping of the crop commences,



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and a measure or two of grain from the crop gathered on the first day, called *nisal*, is set apart for the Mahalingaswami temple.

The most important gods of the Badagas are Heththeswami, Mahalingaswami, Hiriya Udaya, Madeswara, Mankali, Jadeswami, and Nilgiri Rangaswami. And at the present day, some Badagas proceed to the plains, to worship at the Saivite temple at Karamadai in Coimbatore, or at Nanjangod in Mysore.

The festival in honour of Heththeswami is celebrated in the month of January at Baireganni. It is sometimes called **ermathohabba**, as, with it, ploughing operations cease. It always commences on a Monday, and usually lasts eight days. A Sedan or Devanga weaver comes with his portable hand-loom, and sufficient thread for weaving a dhubati (coarse cloth) and turban. At Baireganni there is a special house, in which these articles are woven. But, at other places where the festival is observed, the Badagas go to the weaver's



village to fetch the required cloths. Early on the second morning of the festival, some of the more respected Badagas and the weaver proceed to the weaving house after bathing. The weaver sets up his loom, and worships it by offering incense, and other things. The Badagas give him a new cloth, and a small sum of money, and ask him to weave a **dhubati** and two **kachches** (narrow strips of cloth). Daily, throughout the festival, the Badagas collect near the temple, and indulge in music and songs.

Until the last day, they are not permitted to set eyes on the god Heththeswami. On the morning of the last day, the pujari, accompanied by all the Badagas, takes the newly woven cloths to a stream, in which they are washed. When they are dry, all proceed to the temple, where the idol is dressed up in them, and all, on this occasion only, are allowed to look at it.

Devotees pay a small offering of money, which is placed on a tray near the idol. The





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crowd begins to disperse in the afternoon, and, on their way back to their villages, the wants of the travellers are attended to by people posted at intervals with coffee, fruit, and other articles of food. If the Badagas have to go to a weaver's village for the cloths, the weaver is, when the order is given for them, presented with four annas, after he has bathed. When handing the money to him, the Badagas bawl out, "This is the fee for making the cloths to be worn by **Heththe Iramasthi** and **Parasakti Parvati**."

On the last day of the festival, the cloths are washed, and one of them is made to represent an idol, which is decorated with waist and neck ornaments, and an umbrella. All prostrate themselves before it, and make offerings of money. Fruits and other things are then offered to Heththeswami and some recite the following prayer. "May all good acts be remembered, and all bad ones be forgotten. Though there may be a thousand and one sins, may I reach the feet of God."



The following further information in connection with the Baireganni festival is given by Bishop Whitehead, "The people from other villages offer money, rice, fruits, umbrellas of gold or silver for the goddess, cloths, and buffaloes. The buffaloes are never killed, but remain as the property of the temple. The pujari calls the representatives of one village, and tells them what Hetheswami says to him, e.g., 'This year you will have good [or bad] crops ; cholera or small-pox, good [or bad] rain, etc.'

“As the people present their offerings, they prostrate themselves, kneeling down and touching the ground with their foreheads, and the pujari gives them some flowers, which they wear in their hair. The people and the pujari play on the kombu [horn], and ring bells while the offerings are being made. After the offerings have finished, all the men dance, in two companies, in front of the temple, one shouting 'How-ko, How-ko' and the other 'Is-holi.' The dance was taught them by the Todas, and the



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words are Toda."

In connection with the Jadeswami festival the ceremony of walking' through fire [burning embers] is carried out at Melur, Tangalu, Mainele, Jakkanare, Tenad, and Nidugala. At Melur and Tangalu, the temples belong to the Haruvas, who carry out all the details of ceremony.

The temple at Tenad is owned by the Udayas, by whom the ceremonial is performed. In other places, the celebrants are Badagas. The festival is observed, on an elaborate scale, at Nidugala during the month of January. All those who are going to walk over the burning embers fast for eight days, and go through the rite on the ninth day. For its performance, Monday is considered an auspicious day. The omens are taken by boiling two pots of milk side by side on two hearths. If the milk overflows uniformly on all sides, the crops will be abundant for all the villages. But, if it flows over on one side only, there will be plentiful crops for





villages on that side only. The space over which the embers are spread is said to be about five yards long, and three yards broad. But, in some places, e.g., Jakkanare and Melur, it is circular as at the Muhammadan fire-walking ceremony.

For making the embers, the wood of *Eugenia Jambolana* and *Phyllanthus Emblica* are used. For boiling the milk, and setting fire to the wood, a light obtained by friction must be used. The



process is known as *niligolu*, or upright stick. The vertical stick is made of a twig of *Rhodomyrtus tomentosus*, which is rotated in a socket in a long thick piece of a bough of *Debregcasia velutina*, in which a row of sockets has been made. The rotation is produced by a cord passed several times round the vertical stick, of which each end is pulled alternately. The horizontal block is pressed firmly on the ground. by the toes of a man, who presses a half cocoanut shell down on the top of the vertical stick, so as to force it down into the



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socket.

A Badaga, who failed in an attempt to demonstrate the making of fire by this method, gave as an excuse that he was under worldly pollution, from which he would be free at the time of the fire-walking ceremony. Though the Badagas make fire by friction, reference is made in their folk legends, not to this mode of obtaining fire, but to **chakkamukki** (flint and steel), which is repeatedly referred to in connection with cremation.

After the milk boiling" ceremonial, the pujari, tying bells on his legs, approaches the fire pit, carrying milk freshly drawn from a cow, which has calved for the first time, and flowers of *Rhododendron arborcum*, *Leucas aspera*, or jasmine.

After doing puja, he throws the flowers on the embers, and they should remain un-scorched for a few seconds. He then pours some of the milk over the embers, and no hissing sound should be produced. The omens being



propitious, he walks over the glowing embers, followed by an Udaya, and the crowd of celebrants, who, before going through the ordeal, count the hairs on their feet. If any are **singed**, it is a sign of approaching ill fortune, or even death.

In an account of the fire-walking ceremony, in 1902, it is noted that "the Badagas strongly repudiate the insinuation of preparing their feet to face the fire ordeal. It is done to propitiate Jeddayswami, to whom vows are invoked, in token of which they grow one twist or plait of hair, which is treasured for years, and finally cut off as an offering to Jeddayswami. Numbers of Chettis were catering to the crowd, offering their wares, bangles, gay-coloured handkerchiefs, as well as edibles.

“The Kotas supplied the music, and an ancient patriarch worked himself up to a high pitch of inspiration, and predicted all sorts of good things for the Badagas with regard to the ensuing season and crops.”





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The following legend, relating to the fire-walking ceremony, is recorded by Bishop Whitehead. "When they first began to perform the ceremony fifty or sixty years ago, they were afraid to walk over the fire. Then the stone image of Mahalinga Swami turned into a snake, and made a hole through the temple wall. It came out, and crawled over the fire, and then went back to the temple. Then their fear vanished, and they walked over the embers. The hole is still to be seen in the temple."

Of the fire-walking ceremony at Melur, the following account is given in the Gazetteer of the Nilgiris. "It takes place on the Monday after the March new moon, just before the cultivation season begins, and is attended by Badagas from all over Merkunad. The inhabitants of certain villages (six in number), who are supposed to be the descendants of an early Badaga named Guruvajja, have first, however, to signify through their Gottukars, or headmen, that the festival may take place ; and the



Gottukars choose three, five, or seven men to walk through the fire. On the day appointed, the fire is lit by certain Badaga priests and a Kurumba. The men chosen by the Gottukars then bathe, adorn themselves with sandal, do obeisance to the Udayas of Udayarhatti near Ketu, who are specially invited and feasted ; pour into the adjacent stream milk from cows which have calved for the first time during the year ; and, in the afternoon, throw more milk and some flowers from the Mahalingasvami temple into the fire pit, and then walk across it.

“Earth is next thrown on the embers, and they walk across twice more. A general feast closes the ceremony, and next day the first ploughings are done, the Kurumba sowing the first seeds, and the priests the next lot. Finally, a net is brought. The priest of the temple, standing over it, puts up prayers for a favourable agricultural season ; two fowls are thrown into it, and a pretence is made of spearing them ; and then it is taken and put across some game path, and



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some wild animal (a sambhar deer if possible) is driven into it, slain, and divided among the villagers. This same custom of annually killing a sambhar is also observed at other villages on the plateau, and in 1883 and 1894 special orders were passed to permit of its being done during the close season.

Latterly, disputes about precedence in the matter of walking through the fire at Melur have been carried as far as the civil courts, and the two factions celebrate the festival separately in alternate years. A fire-walking ceremony also takes place annually at the Jadayasvami temple in Jakkaneri under the auspices of a Sivachari Badaga. It seems to have originally had some connection with agricultural prospects, as a young bull is made to go partly across the fire-pit before the other devotees, and the owners of young cows which have had their first calves during the year take precedence of others in the ceremony, and bring offerings of milk, which are sprinkled over the burning embers."





At the Sakalathi festival, in the month of October, Badagas, towards evening, throw on the roofs of their houses flowers of *Plectranthus Wightii*, *Crotalaria obtecta*, *Lobelia nicotianæfolia*, *Achyranthes aspera*, and *Leucas aspera*. On the following day, they clean their houses, and have a feast. In the afternoon, numbers of them may be seen in the streets drawing in front of their houses pictures in wood-ashes of buffaloes, bulls, cows, ploughs, stars, sun and moon, snakes, lizards, etc. They then go into their houses, and wash their hands. Taking up in his clean hands a big cake, on which are placed a little rice and butter, the Badaga puts on it three wicks steeped in castor oil, and lights them. The cake is then waved round the heads of all the children of the house taken to a held, and thrown therein with the words "**Sakalathi** has come."

The cake-thrower returns home, and prostrates himself before a lamp placed in the inner room, and repeats a long formula,



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composed of the various synonyms of Siva.

In the month of November, a festival called **Dodda Habba** (big feast) is celebrated. In the afternoon, rice is cooked in whey within the hagottu. and eaten on **minige** leaves. Throughout the day the villagers play at various ball games.

A festival, which is purely local, is celebrated near Konakore in honour of Mahangkali. A buffalo is led to the side of a precipice, killed by a Kurumba with a spear, and thrown over the edge thereof.

There is a legend that, in olden days, a pujari used to put a stick in the crevice of a rock, and, on removing it, get the value of a buffalo in fanams (gold coins). But, on one occasion, he put the stick in a second time, in the hopes of gaining more money. No money, however, was forthcoming and, as a punishment for his greed, he died on the spot.

All Badaga villages, except those of the



Udayas, have a hut, called **holagudi**, for the exclusive use of women during their monthly periods. A few months before a girl is expected to reach puberty, she is sent to the holagudi, on a Friday, four or five days before the new moon day. This is done lest, in the ordinary course of events, the first menstruation should commence on an inauspicious day. The girl remains in the holagudi one night, and returns home on the following day clad in new cloths, leaving the old ones in the hut. When she arrives at her house, she salutes all the people who are there, and receives their blessing. On Sunday she goes to the houses of her relations, where she is given **kadalai** (*Cicer arictlinum*) and other food. She may not enter the inner apartment of her house until she has seen the crescent moon.

Badaga women observe five days menstrual pollution. If a woman discovers her condition before washing her face in the early morning, that day is included in the pollution period. Otherwise, the period must be prolonged over





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six days. On the third day she bathes in cold water, using the bark of **Pouzolzia** (*thorekolu*), and on the fourth day is allowed a change of clothing after a bath. On this day she leaves the hut, and passes a portion of the night in the verandah of her house.

After cooking and eating her evening meal, she bathes, and enters the outer room. Early on the following morning, the spot which she has occupied is cleaned, and she bathes in a stream. Returning home, she eats her food in the outer room, where she remains till next morning. Even children may not be touched by a menstruating woman. If, by chance, this happens, the child must be washed to remove the pollution, before it can be handled by others. This restriction is apparently not observed by any other tribe or caste.

Writing concerning marriage among the Badagas, Harkness states \* that "it is said to be common for one who is in want of labourers to promise his daughter in marriage to the son or



other relative of a neighbour not in circumstances so flourishing as himself. And, these engagements being entered into, the intended bridegroom serves the father of his betrothed as one of his own family till the girl comes of age, when the marriage is consummated, and he becomes a partner in the general property of the family of his father-in-law."

\* op. cit.

A man may marry a girl belonging to the same village as himself, if he and she are not members of the same exogamous sept. In most cases, however, all the inhabitants of a village are of the same sept, and a man has to take as his wife a girl from a village other than his own.

Among all sections of the Badagas, adult marriage is the general rule, though infant marriage is also practised. Marriage is preceded by a simple form of courtship, but the consent of the parents to the union is necessary. A girl



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does not suffer in reputation if she is rejected by a number of suitors, before she finally settles down.

Except among the Udayas, the marriage ceremony is of a very simple nature. A day or two before that fixed for taking the girl to the house of her husband-elect, the latter proceeds to her village, accompanied by his brothers, who, as a token of respect, touch the feet of all the Badagas who are assembled. The bride is taken to the house of the bridegroom, accompanied by the Kota band. Arrived there, she stands at the entrance, and her mother-in-law or sister-in-law brings water in a vessel, and pours it into her hands thrice. Each time she lets the water fall over her feet. The mother-in-law then ties round her neck a string of beads (*male mani*) and leads her to the outer room (**edumane**), where cooked **samai** (*Panicum miliare*) and milk is given to her. This she pretends to eat, and the bridegroom's sister gives her water to wash her hands with. The





bride and two married women or virgins (preferably the bridegroom's sisters) go to a stream in procession, accompanied by the Kota musicians, and bring therefrom water for cooking purposes in decorated new pots. The bride then salutes all her new relations, and they in turn give her their blessing. The ceremonial concludes with a feast, at the conclusion of which, in some cases, the bride and bridegroom sit on the raised verandah (**pial**), and receive presents.

"Though," a correspondent writes, "the Badaga is simple, and his wants are few, he cannot resist the temptation of wine and women. The Badaga woman can change husbands as often as she pleases by a simple system of divorce, and can also carry on with impunity intimacy within the pale of her own community. It is not uncommon to find Badaga women changing husbands, so long as youth and vigour tempt them to do so, and confining themselves eventually to the last individual,



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after age and infirmity have made their mark, and render such frolics inexpedient."

A former Magistrate of the Nilgiris informs me that he tried more than one case, in which a married man filed a complaint against another man for kidnapping or enticing away his wife for immoral purposes. The father of the woman was always charged as an abettor, and pleaded that, as no **pariyam** (bride price) had been paid by the husband, though he and the woman lived together as man and wife, no criminal offence could be proved against either the father or the abductor.

Polygamy is permitted, and the plurality of wives is a gain to the husband, as each wife becomes a bread-winner, and supports her children, and the man makes each wife superintend one department of the day's work.

Remarriage of widows is very common, and a widow may marry the **brother of her deceased husband**.



It is said to be etiquette among the Badagas that, when a woman's husband is away, [she should be accessible to her brothers-in-law](#). Instances occur, in which the husband is much younger than his wife, who, until he has reached maturity, [cohabits with her paternal aunt's son](#), or some one whom she may have a fancy for.

The marriage ceremony of the Udayas is carried out on an elaborate scale, and is based on the type of ceremonial which is carried out by some castes in the plains. Before dawn on the marriage day, the brothers and cousins of the bridegroom go, accompanied by some Udayas and the Kota band, to the forest, whence they bring two sticks of *Mimusops hexandra*, to do duty as the milk-posts. The early hour is selected, to avoid the chance of coming across inauspicious objects. The sticks should be cut off the tree at a single stroke of the bill-hook, and they may not be laid flat on the ground, but placed on a blanket spread





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thereon.

The Udayas, who joined in the procession, collect twelve posts of *Mimusops* as supports for the marriage booth (**pandal**). In front of the house, which is to be the scene of the wedding, two pits are dug, into which cow-dung water is poured. The pujari does poja to the milk-posts by offering sugar-cane, jaggery (crude sugar), etc., and ties two threads thereto. The posts are then placed in the pits by five people—the parents of the bridal couple and the priest. The booth, and dais or enclosure, are then erected close to the milk-posts. On the second day, the bridegroom's party, attended by Kota musicians, dressed up in dancing costume, go to the house of the bride, where a feast is held. The bride then salutes a lamp, and prostrates herself at the feet of her parents, who bless her, saying “May your body and hands soon be filled (i.e., may you have a child), and may your life be prosperous.”

The bride is taken in procession to the house



of the bridegroom, accompanied by some Udayas, and a Toreya carrying a bag of rice. At the entrance to the house she is blindfolded, and her mother-in-law pours water over her feet, and waves coloured water (*arathi*) in front of her. She then enters the house, right foot foremost, and sits on a mat. Three married women, nearly related to the bridegroom, proceed, with the Kota musicians, to a stream, carrying three pots decorated with leaves of *Leucas aspera*.

The priest does poja, and the pots are filled with water, and brought back in procession to the marriage dais. The water is poured into three vessels placed thereon three times by each of the three women.

Within the marriage enclosure, two raised platforms are set up by a **Toreya**.

The bridegroom, after going round the enclosure three times with his brothers and sisters, enters it, and bathes with the water contained in the vessels. He then dresses



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himself in new clothes, and is carried to the outer room by his maternal uncle. The bride is then treated in like manner, but is taken to the inner room. At a fixed auspicious hour, the bridal couple repair to the enclosure, where the bridegroom stands on a mat. A screen is held up by four or five men between him and the bride, who stands facing him, while the priest ties the ends of their clothes together. They then link their little fingers together, the screen is removed, and they seat themselves on the mat. The bridegroom's sister brings a tray with a mass of rice scooped out into a cavity to hold ghi for feeding a lighted wick (*annadha arathi*) on it, and, placing it before the bridal pair, sits down. The tali, consisting of a golden disc, is worshipped by the priest, and given to the bridegroom, who ties it on to the bride's neck. In some places it is tied by four or five elders, belonging to different villages, who are not widowers.

The contracting couple then put on wreaths





called **sammandha malai**, or wreaths establishing relationship, and the wrist threads are tied on. The bride's sister brings some rice and milk in a cup, into which the linked fingers of the bride and bridegroom are thrust. Taking up some of the rice, they put it into each other's mouths three times. After they have washed their hands, the maternal uncle or priest asks them if they have seen **Aranjoti** (the polestar), and they reply in the affirmative.

On the third day, presents are given to the newly-married couple, and the wrist threads are removed. Going to a stream, they perform a mimic ceremony of sowing, and scatter cotton and rice seed in two small pans made by a Toreya with cow-dung.

Widow remarriage is permitted among the Udayas, and a widow may marry a cousin, but not her dead husband's brother. At the marriage ceremony, a priest makes a mark with sacred ashes on the foreheads of the contracting couple, and announces the fact of their union.



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It is noted by Dr. Rivers that "Breeks has stated that the Toda custom is that the house shall pass to the youngest son. It seems quite clear that this is wrong, and that this custom is absolutely unknown among the Todas. It is, however, a Badaga custom, and among them I was told that it is due to the fact that, as the sons of a family grow up and marry, they leave the house of the parents and build houses elsewhere. It is the duty of the youngest son to dwell with his parents, and support them as long as they live, and, when they die, he continues to live in the paternal home, of which he becomes the owner."

A ceremony is performed in the seventh month of a woman's first pregnancy, which is important, inasmuch as it seals the marriage contract, and, after its performance, divorce can only be obtained through the decree of the **panchayat** (tribal council).

Moreover, if it has not been performed, a man cannot claim the paternity of the child. The



ceremony is called **kanni kattodu** or **kanni hakodu** (thread tying or throwing). The husband and wife are seated in the midst of those who have assembled for the occasion, and the former asks his father-in-law whether he may throw the thread round his wife's neck, and, having received permission, proceeds to do so. If he gets the thread, which must have no knots in it, entangled in the woman's bunch of hair (**kondai**), which is made large for the occasion by the addition of false hair, he is fined three rupees.

On the day of the ceremony, the man and his wife are supposed to be under pollution, and sit in the verandah to receive presents. The mats used by them for sleeping on are cleaned on the following morning, and they get rid of the pollution by bathing.

A first confinement must not take place within the house, and the verandah is converted into a lying-in chamber, from which the woman is, after delivery, removed to the outer apartment,





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where she remains till she is free from pollution by catching sight of the crescent moon.

If a woman has been delivered at her father's house, she returns to the home of her husband within a month of the birth of the child on an auspicious day. On arrival there, the infant is placed near the feet of an old man standing by a lamp within the milk-house. Placing his right hand over the head of the infant, the old man blesses it, and a feast is held, before the commencement of which two cups, one containing milk, and the other cooked rice, are produced. All the relations take up a little of the milk and rice, and touch the tongue of the baby with them.

A child receives its name on the seventh, ninth, or eleventh day. A sumptuous meal is given to the community, and the grandfather (paternal, if possible) milks a cow, and pours the milk into a brass cup placed in the milk-house. With it a little cooked samai grain is mixed. The babe is washed with water brought



from a stream; marked on the forehead with sacred ashes ; a turmeric-dyed thread is tied round its waist ; a silver or iron bangle placed on its wrists ; and a silver bead tied by a thread round its neck. Thus decorated, the infant is taken up by the oldest man of the village who is not a widower, who gives it a name, which has already been chosen.

The elder, and the child's parents and grandparents then place a little milk in its mouth. Children, both male and female, go through a shaving ceremony, usually when they are seven months old. The infant is seated in the lap of a Badaga, and, after water has been applied to its head by a Badaga or a barber, the maternal uncle removes some of the hair with a razor, and then hands it over to another Badaga or a barber to complete the operation.

Of the death rites as carried out by the Badaga subdivision, the following note was recorded during a visit to Kotagiri. When death is drawing near, a gold coin, called **Viraraya**



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**hana** or **fanam**, dipped in butter or ghi, is given to the dying man to swallow. If he is too far gone to be capable of swallowing, the coin is, according to Mr. Natesa Sastri, tied round the arm. But our informants told us that this is not done at the present day.

"If," Mr. Cover writes,\* "the tiny coin slips down, well. He will need both gold and ghi, the one to sustain his strength in the dark journey to the river of death, the other to fee the guardian of the fairy-like bridge that spans the dreaded tide. If sense remains to the wretched man, he knows that now his death is nigh. Despair and the gold make recovery impossible, and there are none who have swallowed the Biri**a**nhana, and yet have lived. If insensibility or deathly weakness makes it impossible for the coin to pass the thorax, it is carefully bound in cloth, and tied to the right arm, so that there may be nought to hinder the passage of a worthy soul into the regions of the blessed."

\* op. cit.





The giving of the coin to the dying man is apparently an important item, and, in the Badaga folk-tales, a man on the point of death is made to ask for a *Viraraya fanam*. When life is extinct, the corpse is kept within the house until the erection of the funeral car (**gudikattu**) is completed.

Though Gover states that the burning must not be delayed more than twenty-four hours, at the present day the Badagas postpone the funeral till all the near relations have assembled, even if this necessitates the keeping of the corpse for two or three days. Cremation may take place on any day, except Tuesday. News of a death is conveyed to distant hamlets (**hattis**) by a Toreya, who is paid a rupee for his services.

On approaching a hamlet, he removes his turban, to signify the nature of his errand, and, standing on the side of a hill, yells out "Dho ! Dho ! who is in the hamlet"? Having imparted his news, he proceeds on his journey to the



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next hamlet. On the morning of the day fixed for the funeral, the corpse is taken on a charpoy or native cot to an open space, and a buffalo led thrice round it. The right hand of the corpse is then lifted up, and passed over the horns of the buffalo. A little milk is drawn, and poured into the mouth of the corpse. Prior to this ceremony, two or three buffaloes may be let loose, and one of them captured, after the manner of the Todas, brought near the corpse, and conducted round the cot.

The funeral car is built up in five to eleven tiers, decorated with cloths and streamers, and one tier must be covered with black **chintz**. At the funeral of a young man, the Rev. A. C. Clayton noticed that the car was surmounted by flag, and hung about with bread, oranges, plantains, and the bag containing the books which the youth had used in the Basel Mission School.\*

\* Madras Mail, 1907.



By the poorer members of the community the car is replaced by a cot covered with cloth, and surmounted by five umbrellas. Immediately after the buffalo ceremony, the corpse is carried to the car, and placed in the lowest storey thereof, washed, and dressed in coat and turban. A new **dhupati** (coarse cloth) is wrapped round it. Two silver coins (Japanese yens or rupees) are stuck on the forehead. Beneath the cot are placed a crowbar, and baskets containing cakes, parched paddy, tobacco, chick pea (*Cicer arietinum*), jaggery and samai flour.

A number of women, relations and friends of the dead man, then make a rush to the cot, and, sitting on it round the corpse, keep on waiting, while a woman near its head rings a bell. When one batch is tired, it is replaced by another. Badaga men then pour in in large numbers, and salute the corpse by touching the head, Toreyas and female relations touching the feet.

Of those who salute, a few place inside the dhupati a piece of white cloth with red and





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yellow stripes, which has been specially prepared for the purpose. All then proceed to dance round the car to the music of the Kota band, near male relations removing their turban or woollen night cap, as a mark of respect, during the first three revolutions.

Most of the male dancers are dressed up in gaudy petticoats and smart turbans.

“No woman,” Mr. Natesa Sastri writes, “mingles In the funeral dance if the dead person is a man, but, if the deceased is a woman, one old woman, the nearest relative of the dead, takes part in it.”

But, at the funerals of two men which we witnessed, a few women danced together with the men. Usually the tribesmen continue to arrive until 2 or 3 P.M. Relations collect outside the village, and advance in a body towards the car, some, especially the sons-in-law of the dead man, riding on ponies, some of them carrying samai grain. As they approach the car, they shout “Ja ! hoch ; Ja ! hoch.”



The Muttu Kotas bring a double iron sickle with imitation buffalo horns on the tip, which is placed, with a hatchet, **buguri** (flute), and walking stick, on the car or on the around beside it. When all are assembled, the cot is carried to an open space between the house and the burning-ground, followed by the car and a party of women carrying the baskets containing grain, etc. The car is then stripped of its trappings, and hacked to pieces.

The widow is brought close to the cot, and removes her nose ornament (**elemukkuthi**), and other jewels. At both the funerals which we witnessed, the widow had a narrow strip of coloured chintz over her shoulders. Standing near the corpse, she removed a bit of wire from her ear-rings, a lock of hair, and a palm leaf roll from the lobe of the ear, and tied them up in the cloth of her dead husband. After her, the sisters of the dead man cut off a lock of hair, and, in like manner, tied it in the cloth.

Women attached to a man by illegitimate ties



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sometimes also cut off a lock of hair, and, tying it to a twig of *Dodonæa viscosa*, place it inside the cloth. Very impressive is the recitation, or after-death confession of a dead man's sins by an elder of the tribe standing at the head of the corpse, and rapidly chanting the following lines, or a variation thereof, while he waves his right hand during each line towards the feet. The reproduction of the recitation in my phonograph never failed to impress the daily audience of Badagas, Kotas and Todas.

This is the death of Andi.

In his memory the calf of the cow Belle has  
been set free.

From this world to the other.

He goes in a car.

Everything the man did in this world.

All the sins committed by his ancestors.

All the sins committed by his forefathers.

All the sins committed by his parents.

All the sins committed by himself





The estranging of brothers.

Shifting the boundary line.

Encroaching on a neighbour's land by removing  
the hedge.

Driving away brothers and sisters.

Cutting the kalli tree stealthily.

Cutting the muUi tree outside his boundary.

Dragging the thorny branches of the kotte tree.

Sweeping with a broom.

Splitting green branches.

Telling lies.

Uprooting seedlings.

Plucking growing plants, and throwing them in  
the sun.

Giving young birds to cats.

Troubling the poor and cripples.

Throwing refuse water in front of the sun

Going to sleep after seeing an eclipse of the  
moon.



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Looking enviously at a buffalo yielding an abundance of milk.

Being jealous of the good crops of others.

Removing boundary stones.

Using a calf set free at the funeral.

Polluting water with dirt.

Urinating on burning embers.

Ingratitude to the priest.

Carrying tales to the higher authorities.

Poisoning food.

Not feeding a hungry person.

Not giving fire to one half frozen.

Killing snakes and cows.

Killing lizards and blood-suckers.

Showing a wrong path.

Getting on the cot, and allowing his father-in-law  
to sleep on  
the ground.

Sitting on a raised verandah, and driving thence  
his mother-inlaw.



Going against natural instincts.

Troubling daughters-in-law.

Breaking open lakes.

Breaking open reservoirs of water.

Being envious of the prosperity of other villages.

Getting angry with people.

Misleading travellers in the forest.

Though there be three hundred such sins,  
Let them all go with the calf set free to-day.

May the sins be completely removed !

May the sins be forgiven !

May the door of heaven be open !

May the door of hell be closed !

May the hand of charity be extended !

May the wicked hand be shrivelled !

May the door open suddenly !

May beauty or splendour prevail everywhere !

May the hot pillar be cooled !

May the thread bridge\* become light!





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May the pit of perdition be closed !

May he reach the golden pillar !

Holding the feet of the six thousand Athis,

Holding the feet of the twelve thousand Tathis,

Holding the feet of Brahma,

Holding the feet of the calf set free to-day,

May he reach the abode of Siva !

So mote it be.

\* The bridge spanning the river of death, which the blessed cross in safety.

The recitation is repeated thrice, and a few Badagas repeat the last words of each line after the elder. It was noticed by the Rev. A. C. Clayton that, during the recitation, the people surrounded the bier on three sides, leaving a lane open to the west. The sins of the dead man were transferred to another as sin-bearer, and finally passed away down the lane. As the ceremony witnessed by us differs materially from the account thereof given by Cover nearly



**CLICK HERE**



forty years ago, I may quote his description.

“By a conventional mode of expression, the sum total of sins a man may do is said to be thirteen hundred. Admitting that the deceased has committed them all, the performer cries aloud ' Stay not their flight to God's pure feet.' As he closes, the whole assembly chants aloud ' Stay not their flight.' Again the performer enters



into details, and cries ' He killed the crawling snake. It is a sin.' In a moment the last word is caught up, and all the people cry ' It is a sin.'

“As they shout, the performer lays his hand upon the calf. The sin is transferred to the calf. Thus the whole catalogue is gone through in this impressive way. But this is not enough. As the last shout 'Let all be well ' dies away, the performer gives place to another, and again confession is made, and all the people shout 'It is a sin.' A third time it is done. Then, still in



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solemn silence, the calf is let loose. Like the Jewish scapegoat, it may never be used for secular work."

Dr. Rivers writes that "the Badagas let loose a calf at a funeral, to bear the sins of the deceased. It is possible that the calf in the Toda ceremony may have the same significance. If so, the practice has not improbably been borrowed, and the fact that the bell which is hung on the neck of the calf is kept by Kotas or Badagas suggests that the whole incident may have been borrowed by the Todas from one or other of these races."

At the funerals, of which we were spectators, no calf was brought near the corpse, and the celebrants of the rites were satisfied with the mere mention by name of a calf, which is male or female according to the sex of the deceased. At the funeral witnessed by the Rev. A. C. Clayton, a cow-buffalo was led three times round the bier, and a little of its milk, drawn at the time, put into the mouth of the corpse. Then





BADAGA FUNERAL CAR.

a buffalo calf was led thrice round the bier, and the dead man's hand laid on its head. By this act, the calf was supposed to receive all the sins of the deceased. It was then driven away to a great distance, that it might contaminate no one, and it was said that it would never be sold, but looked on as a dedicated sacred animal.

If a dead man leaves a widow in a state of pregnancy, who has not performed the **kanni kattodu** or marriage thread ceremony, this must be gone through before the corpse is taken to the pyre, in order to render the child legitimate. The pregnant woman is, at the time of the funeral, brought close to the cot, and a near relation of the deceased, taking up a cotton thread, twisted in the form of a necklace without any knots, throws it round her neck. Sometimes the hand of the corpse is lifted up with the thread, and made to place it round the neck.

At the funeral of the young man, Mr. Clayton



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saw this ceremony performed on his pregnant wife. After a turmeric-dyed cord had been taken from the hands of the corpse and tied round her neck, she was again brought to the side of the bier, and her ear-rings, nose ornaments, and other articles of jewellery, were removed in token that she had become a widow. Soon after the recitation of sins, all the agnates go to the house of the dead man, at the entrance to which a gunny-bag is spread, whereon a small quantity of paddy is poured, and a few culms of *Cynodon Dactylon* and a little cow-dung are placed on it.

The eldest of the agnates, sickle in hand, takes some of the paddy, and moves on, raising both hands to his forehead. The other agnates then do the same, and proceed in Indian file, males in front and females in the rear, to the corpse. Round it they walk, men from left to right, and women in the reverse direction, and at the end of each circuit put some of the paddy on its face. The cot is then carried to the



burning-ground, a woman heading the procession, and shaking the end of her cloth all the way. The corpse is laid on the pyre with its feet to the south, and the pyre lighted by the eldest son standing at the head. The sticks of which the car was constructed are added to the fuel, of which the pyre is built up. In some places the son, when lighting the pyre, repeats the words "Being begotten by my father and mother, I, in the presence of all and the Deva, set fire at the head after the manner of my ancestors and forefathers."

The Rev. A. C. Clayton records that, before the procession started for the burning-ground, some female relatives of the dead man tied locks of their hair round the toes of the corpse, and others went three times round the bier. On the day following the funeral, the bereaved family distribute rice to all the Badagas of the hamlet, and all the near relations of the deceased go to the burning-ground, taking with them two new pots. The fire is extinguished,





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and the fragments of the bones are collected.

A tray is made of the fronds of the bracken fern (*Pteris aquilina*) covered with a cloth, on which the bones are placed together with culms of *Cynodon* grass and ghi. The Badagas of the hamlet who are younger than the deceased salute the bones by touching them, and a few men, including the chief mourner, hold the tray, and convey it to the bone pit, which every hamlet possesses.

Into it the bones are thrown, while an elder repeats the words "Become united with the line of your relations, with your class, and with the big people," or " May the young and old who have died, may all those who have died from time immemorial up to the present time, mingle in one."

When the pit has been closed up, all return to the spot where the body was burnt, and, clearing a space, make a puddle, round which they stand, and throw into it a handful of **korali** (*Setaria italica*), uttering the words " May deaths



cease ; may evils cease ; may good prevail in the village ; in virtue of the good deeds of the ancestors and forefathers, may this one mingle with them."

This ceremony concluded, they repair to a stream, where a member of the bereaved family shaves a Toreya partially or completely. Some take a razor, and, after removing a patch of hair, pass the Toreya on to a barber. All the agnates are then shaved by a Badaga or a barber. The chief mourner then prostrates himself on the ground, and is blessed by all. He and the Toreya proceed to the house of the deceased.

Taking a three-pronged twig of *Rhodomyrtus tomentosa*, and placing a minige (*Argyreia*) leaf on the prongs, he thrusts it into a rubbish heap near the house. He then places a small quantity of samai grain, called street food, on the leaf, and, after sprinkling it thrice with water, goes away. It was noted by Harkness that, at the burning-ground, the son or representative of the deceased dropped a little grain into the



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mouth of the corpse, carrying in his left hand a small bar of iron, which is supposed to have a repulsive power over the spirits that hover about the dead.

The final death ceremonies, or **korambu**, are celebrated on a Sunday. Towards evening the house of the deceased is cleansed with cow-dung, and Badaga men assemble therein, sending away all women. The chief mourner, accompanied by two Badagas carrying new pots, proceeds to a stream, where the pots are cleaned with cow-dung, and rubbed over with culms of *Andropogon Schoenanthus*. They are then filled with water, carried to the house, and deposited in the milk-room. At the entrance to the inner apartment, five agnates stand, holding a circular bamboo tray (**kerachi**) made of plaited bamboo, on which the chief mourner pours a small quantity of paddy, and spreads it with a sickle.

The widow and other female relations come near, and cry. A few sickles or knives





(preferably those which were used at the funeral) are placed on the tray, which is saluted by all the Badagas present. The paddy is husked in a mortar, and the rice cooked with *Dolichos Lablab*, *Cicer arietinum*, and other pulses, without the addition of salt.

Early on the following morning, the eldest son, taking a small quantity of the rice to the roof of the house, places seven balls made therefrom on plantain or minige leaves, and recites the names of the male and female ancestors and forefathers, his mother, father, and brothers. The remainder of the rice is eaten by relations.

In some places, the whole of the rice is divided into seven balls, and taken outside the house. Water is sprinkled over the roof, and a portion of the rice thrown thereon. Standing up before the assembled Badagas, an elder says "To-day we have acted up to the observances of our ancestors and forefathers. New ones should not be considered as old, or old as new.



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There is not a man carrying a head (wise man), or a woman carrying breasts (wise woman). May he become united with the men of his clan and caste."

The funeral rites of the Udayas differ in some important details from those of the Badaga subdivision. The buffalo catching, and leading the animal round the corpse, are omitted. But a steer and heifer are selected, and branded on the thigh, by means of a hot iron, with the lingam and other emblems. Bedecked with cloths and jewels, they are led to the side of the corpse, and made to stand on a blanket spread on the ground. They are treated as if they were lingams, and puja is done to them by offering cocoanuts and betel leaves, and throwing flowers over them. Round their necks **kankanams** (marriage threads) are tied. They are made to turn so as to face away from the corpse, and their tails are placed in the hands thereof.

An elder then proceeds with the recitation of



the dead person's sins. The Udayas bury their dead in a sitting posture in a cell dug out of the side of the grave, and, like the Irulas, prefer to use a grave in which a previous burial has taken place. At the four corners of the grave they place in the ground a plant of *Leucas aspera*, and pass a cotton thread laterally and diagonally across the grave, leaving out the side opposite the cell. Two men descend into the grave, and deposit the corpse in its resting place with two lighted lamps.

In 1905, an elaborate Badaga memorial ceremony for ancestors called manavalai, which takes place at long intervals, was celebrated on the Nilgiris. I gather from the notes of a Native official that an enormous car, called *elu kudi teru* (seven-storeyed car) was built of wood and bamboo, and decorated with silk and woollen fabrics, flags, and umbrellas.

Inside the ground floor were a cot with a mattress and pillow, and the stem of a plantain tree. The souls of the ancestors are supposed





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to be reclining on the cot, resting their heads on the pillow, and chewing the plantain, while the umbrellas protect them from the sun and rain. The ear ornaments of all those who have died since the previous ceremony should be placed on the cot.

"A Badaga fell and hurt himself during the erection of the car. Whereupon, another Badaga became possessed, and announced that the god was angry because a Kurumba had something to do with the building of the structure. A council meeting was held, and the Kurumba fined twenty-five rupees, which were credited to the god. Sixty-nine petty bazars and three beer taverns had been opened for the convenience of all classes of people that had assembled. One very old Badaga woman said that she was twelve years old when the first European was carried in a chair by the Todas, and brought up the ghat to the Nilgiris from Coimbatore.

On Wednesday at 10 a.m. people from the



adjoining villages were announced, and the Kota band, with the village people, went forward, greeted them, and brought them to the car. As each man approached it, he removed his turban, stooped over the pillow and laid his head on it, and then went to join the ring for the dance. The dancers wore skirts made of white long-cloth, white and cream silks and satins with border of red and blue trimming, frock dresses, and dressing-gowns, while the coats, blouses, and jackets were of the most gaudy colours of silk, velvet, velveteen, tweed, and home-spun. As each group of people arrived, they went first to the temple door, saluted the god, and went to the basement of the car to venerate the deceased, and then proceeded to dance for an hour, received their supplies of rice, etc., and cleared off. Thursday and Friday were the grandest days. Nearly three thousand females, and six thousand males, assembled on Thursday. To crown all the confusion, there appeared nearly a thousand Badagas armed



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with new mamotis (spades). They came on dancing for some distance, rushed into the crowd, and danced round the car.

These Badagas belonged to a gang of public works, local fund, and municipal **maistries**. On the last day a sheep was slaughtered in honour of the deity. The musicians throughout the festivities were Kotas and Kurumbas.

The dancing of the men of three score showed that they danced to music, and the stepping was admirable, while the dancing of young men did not show that they had any idea of dancing, or either taste or knowledge of music. They were merely skipping and jumping. This shows that the old art of the Badaga dance is fast decaying."

The cot is eventually burnt at the burning-ground, as if it contained a corpse.

A kind of edible truffle (*Mylilta lapidescens*) is known as little man's bread on the Nilgiris. The Badaga legendary name for it is **Pandva-unna-**





**buthi**, or dwarf bundle of food,\* i.e., food of the dwarfs, who are supposed once to have inhabited the Nilgiris and built the *pandu kolis* or **kistvaens**.

\* Report, Government Botanic Gardens, Nilgiris, 1903.

The story goes that Lord Elphinstone, a former Governor of Madras, was anxious to build a residence at **Kaiti**. But the Badagas, who had on the desired site a sacred tree, would not part with the land. The Governor's steward succeeded in making the Badaga headman drunk, and secured, for a rental of thirty-five rupees annually, the site, whereon a villa was built, which now belongs to the Basel Mission.!

\* E. Schmidt. Reise nach Sudindien, 1894.

In a recent work,

Mr. A. H. Keane, in a note on the "Dravidian Aborigines," writes as follows. "All stand on the very lowest rung of the social ladder, being rude



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hillmen without any culture strictly so called, and often betraying marked negroid characters, as if they were originally Negroes or Negritos, later assimilated in some respects to their Dravidian conquerors. As they never had a collective racial name, they should now be called, not Dravidians or proto-Dravidians, but rather pre-Dravidians, as more collectively indicating their true ethnical relations. Such are the Kotas, Irulas, Badagas, and Kurumbas."

\* The World's Peoples, 1908.

It may be pointed out that the Badagas and Kotas of the Nilgiri plateau are not "wild tribes," have no trace of negroid characters, and no affinities with the Kurumbas and Irulas of the Nilgiri slopes. The figures in the following table speak for themselves :



—	Stature.			Nasal Index.		
	Average cm.	Maximum cm.	Minimum cm.	Average.	Maximum.	Minimum.
Badaga ... ..	164·1	180·2	159·9	75·6	88·4	62·7
Kota ... ..	162·9	174·2	155·	77·2	92·9	64·
Irula ... ..	159·8	168·	152·	84·9	100·	72·3
Kurumba ... ..	157·5	163·6	149·6	88·8	111·	79·1

**Badagi.**—The carpenter sub-division of Panchalas.

**Badhoyi.**—The Badhoyis are Oriya carpenters and blacksmiths, of whom the former are known as **Badhoyi**, and the latter as **Komaro**. These are not separate castes, and the two sections both interdine and inter- marry.

The name Badhoyi is said to be derived from the Sanskrit **vardhaki**, which, in Qriya, becomes bardhaki, and indicates one who changes the form, i.e., of timber. **Korti**, derived from korto, a saw, occurs as the name of a section of the caste, the members of which are wood-sawyers. Socially, the Badhoyis occupy the same position as **Doluvass**, **Kalinjis**, and various other agricultural classes, and they **do not, like the Tamil Kammalans, claim to be Viswakarma**





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**Brahmans**, descended from Viswakarma, the architect of the gods.

The hereditary headman is called **Maharana**, and, in some places, there seem to be three grades of Maharana, viz., Maharana, Dondopato Maharana, and Swangso Maharana. These headmen are assisted by a **Bhollobhaya** or **Dolobehara**, and there is a further official called **Agopothiria**, whose duty it is to eat with an individual who is re-admitted into the caste after a council meeting. This duty is sometimes performed by the Maharana.

Ordinary meetings of council are convened by the Maharana and Bhollobhaya. But, if a case of a serious nature is to be tried, a special council meeting, called **kulo panchayat**, is held in a grove or open space outside the village.

All the Maharanas and other officers, and representatives of five castes (**panchapatako**) equal or superior to the Badhoyis in the social scale, attend such a council. The complainant goes to the Swangso Maharana, and, giving



him fifty areca nuts, asks him to convene the council meeting.

Punishment inflicted by the caste council usually assumes the form of a fine, the amount of which depends on the worldly prosperity of the delinquent, who, if very indigent, may be let off with a reprimand and warning. Sometimes offences are condoned by feeding Brahmans or the Badhoyi community. Small sums, collected as fines, are appropriated by the headman, and large sums are set apart towards a fund for meeting the marriage expenses of the poorer members of the caste, and the expenditure in connection with kulo panchayats.

Concerning the marriage ceremonies, Mr. D. Mahanty writes as follows. "At a marriage among the Badhoyis, and various other castes in Ganjam, two pith crowns are placed on the head of the bridegroom. On his way to the bride's house, he is met by her purohit (priest) and relations, and her barber washes his feet, and presents him with a new yellow cloth,



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flowers, and **kusa** grass (also called **dharbha** grass). When he arrives at the house, amid the recitations of stanzas by the priest, the blowing of conch shells and other music, the women of the bride's party make a noise called **huluhuli**, and shower kusa grass over him.

“At the marriage booth, the bridegroom sits upon a raised ' altar,' and the bride, who arrives accompanied by his maternal uncle, pours salt, yellow-coloured rice, and parched paddy (rice) over the head of the bridegroom, by whose side she seats herself.

“One of the pith crowns is removed from the bridegroom's forehead, and placed on that of the bride. Various Brahmanical rites are then performed, and the bride's father places her hand in that of the bridegroom.

“A bundle of straw is now placed on the altar, on which the contracting parties sit, the bridegroom facing east, and the bride west. The purohit rubs a little jaggery over the bridegroom's right palm, joins it to the palm of





the bride, and ties their two hands together with a rope made of kusa grass (**hasthagonti**). A yellow cloth is tied to the cloths which the bridal pair are wearing, and stretched over their shoulders (**gontiyala**). The hands are then untied by a married woman. Sradha is performed for the propitiation of ancestors, and the purohit, repeating some mantrams (prayers), blesses the pair by throwing yellow rice over them.

“On the sixth day of the ceremony, the bridegroom runs away from the house of his father-in-law, as if he was displeased, and goes to the house of a relation in the same or an adjacent village. His brother-in-law, or other male relation of the bride, goes in search of him, and, when he has found him, rubs some jaggery over his face, and brings him back.”

As an example of the stanzas recited by the purohit, the following may be cited : —

I have presented with my mind and word,  
and also with kusa grass and water.



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The witnesses of this are fire, Brahmans, women, relations, and all the devatas.

Forgive this presentable faithful maid.

I am performing the marriage according to the Vedic rites.

Women are full of all kinds of faults. Forgive these faults.

Brahma is the god of this maid.

By the grace of the god Vasudeva, I give to thee the bridegroom.

The Badhoyis are Paramarthos, and follow the Chaitanya form of Vaishnavism. They further worship various village deities. The dead are cremated. The corpse of a dead person is washed, not at the house, but at the burning-ground. The most common caste title is Maharana. But, in some zemindaris, such titles as **Bindhani Rathno**, and **Bindhani Bushano**, have been conferred by the zemindars on carpenters for the excellence of their work.

The carpenters and blacksmiths hold **inams**



or rentfree lands both under zemindars and under Government. In return, they are expected to construct a car for the annual festival of the village deity, at which, in most places, the car is burnt at the conclusion of the festival.

They have further to make agricultural implements for the villagers, and, when officials arrive on circuit, to supply tent-pegs, etc.

**Bagata.**—The Bagatas, Bhaktas, or Baktas are a class of Telugu fresh-water fishermen, who are said to be very expert at catching fish with a long spear. It is noted, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, that "on the Dasara day they worship the fishing baskets, and also (for some obscure reason) a kind of trident."

The trident is probably the fishing spear. Some of the Bagatas are hill cultivators in the Agency tracts of Vizagapatam. They account for their name by the tradition that they served with great devotion (bhakti) the former rulers of Golconda and Madugula, who made grants of land to them in mokhasa tenure.





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Some of them are heads of hill villages. The head of a single village is called a Padal, and it may be noted that Padala occurs as an exogamous sept of the Kapus, of which caste it has been suggested that the Bagatas are an offshoot.

The overlord of a number of Padals styles himself **Nayak** or Raju, and a Mokhasadar has the title of **Dora**.

It is recorded, in the Census Report, 1871, that "in the low country the Bhaktas consider themselves to take the rank of soldiery, and rather disdain the occupation of ryots (cultivators). Here, however (in hill Madugulu in the Vizagapatam district), necessity has divested them of such prejudices, and they are compelled to delve for their daily bread. They generally, nevertheless, manage to get the **Kapus** to work for them, for they make poor farmers, and are unskilled in husbandry."

It is recorded, in the Gazetteer of the Vizagapatam district, that "**Matsya gundam** (fish



pool) is a curious pool on the **Macheru** (fish river) near the village of Matam, close under the great Yendrika hill, 5,188 feet above the sea. A barrier of rocks runs right across the river there, and the stream plunges into a great hole and vanishes beneath this, reappearing again about a hundred yards lower down. Just where it emerges from under the barrier, it forms a pool, which is crowded with **mahseer** of all sizes. These are wonderfully tame, the bigger ones feeding fearlessly from one's hand, and even allowing their backs to be stroked. They are protected by the Madgole zamindars—**who on several grounds venerate all fish**—and by superstitious fears.

Once, goes the story, a **Brinjari** caught one and turned it into curry, whereon the king of the fish solemnly cursed him, and he and all his pack-bullocks were turned into rocks, which may be seen there till this day. At Sivaratri, a festival occurs at the little thatched shrine near by, the priest at which is a Bagata, and part of



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the ritual consists in feeding the sacred fish.

"In 1901, certain envious Bagatas looted one of the villages of the Konda Malas or hill Paraiyans, a pushing set of traders, who are rapidly acquiring wealth and exalted notions, on the ground that **they were becoming unduly arrogant**. The immediate cause of the trouble was the fact that at a cockfight the Malas' birds had defeated the Bagatas'."

In a note on the Bagatas, Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao writes that the caste is divided into exogamous septs or **intiperulu**, some of which occur also among the Kapus, Telagas, and Vantaris. Girls are married either before or after puberty, and the custom, called **menarikam**, which renders it a man's duty to marry his maternal uncle's daughter, is the general rule.

An Oriya or Telugu Brahman officiates at marriages, and the bride is presented with jewellery as a substitute for the bride-price (**voli**) in money. It is noted, in the Census Report, 1901, that, at a wedding, the bridegroom is





struck by his brother-in-law, who is then presented with a pair of new cloths.

The Bagatas are both Vaishnavites and Saivites, and the former get themselves branded on the arm by a Vaishnava guru, who lives in the Godavari district. The Vaishnavites burn their dead, and the Saivites bury them in the customary sitting attitude. **Satanis** officiate for the former, and **Jangams** for the latter. Both sections perform the **chinna** and **pedda rozu** (big and little day) death ceremonies. The hill Bagatas observe the **Itiga Ponduga** festival, which is celebrated by the hill classes in Vizagapatam.

**Bahusagara** (many seas).—Recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as a synonym of Rangari. The Rangaris are tailors and dyers, and the signification of the name is not clear.

**Baidya**.—See Vaidyan.

**Bainedu**.—The Bainedu, or Bainedi, as they are called in the Census Report, 1901, are the



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musicians and barbers of the Malas and Madigas. At the peddadinamu death ceremony of the Gamallas, a Mala Bainedu takes part in the recitation of the story of **Ankamma**, and in making the designs (muggu) on the ground.

**Bairagi.**—The Bairagis are a class of religious mendicants, who roam about all over India, and are for the most part recruited from North Indian castes. They are followers of **Ramanand**, who founded the order at the end of the fourteenth, or beginning of the fifteenth century. According to common tradition, the schism of Ramanand originated in resentment of an affront offered him by his fellow disciples, and sanctioned by his teacher.

It is said that he had spent some time in travelling through various parts of India, after which he returned to the math, or residence of his superior. His brethren objected to him that in the course of his peregrinations it was impossible he could have observed that privacy in his meals, which is a vital observance of the



Ramanuja sect ; and, as Raghavanand admitted the validity of the objection, Ramanand was condemned to feed in a place apart from the rest of the disciples. He was highly incensed at the order, and retired from the society altogether, establishing a schism of his own.\*

\* H. H. Wilson, Essays .and Lectures, chiefly on the Religion of the Hindus, 1862.

The name Bairagi is derived from the Sanskrit **vairagya** (vi + rag), denoting without desire or passion, and indicates an ascetic, who has subdued his passions, and liberated himself from worldly desires. The Bairagis are sometimes called Bavaji or Sadhu.

The Bairagis are Vaishnavites, and bear the **Tengalai** Vaishnava mark (**namam**), made with sandal-paste or gopi, on the forehead. Bairagis with a **Vadagalai** mark are very rare. The Bairagis wear necklaces of **tulsi** (*Ocimum sanctum*) beads or lotus (*Nelumbium speciosum*) seeds. Every Bairagi cooks his food





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within a space cleansed with cow-dung water by himself or his disciple, and will not leave the space until he has finished his meal.

The Bairagis are not particular about screening the space from the public gaze. They partake of one meal daily, in the afternoon, and are abstainers from flesh dietary. They live mainly on alms obtained in the bazars, or in choultries (rest-houses for travellers).

They generally carry with them one or two brass vessels for cooking purposes, a **salagrama** stone and a conch-shell for worship, and a **chillum** (pipe) for smoking ganja (Indian hemp) or opium.

They are, as a rule, naked except for a small piece of cloth tied round the waist and passed between the thighs. Some wear more elaborate body-clothing, and a turban. They generally allow the beard to grow, and the hair of the head is long and matted, with sometimes a long tail of yak or human hair tied in a knot on the top of the head. Those who go about nearly naked



smear ashes all over their bodies.

When engaged in begging, some go through the streets, uttering aloud the name of some God. Others go from house to house, or remain at a particular spot, where people are expected to give them alms. Some Bairagis are celibates, and others married.

They are supposed to be celibates, but, as Dr. T. N. Bhattacharjee observes,\* the “monks of this order have generally a large number of nuns attached to their convents, with whom they openly live as man and wife.”

\* Hindu Castes and Sects.

The Bairagis are very particular about the worship of the salagrama stone, and will not partake of food without worshipping it. When so doing, they cover their head with a piece of cloth (*Ram nam ka safa*), on which the name Rama is printed in Devanagiri characters. Their face and shoulders are stamped, by means of



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brass stamps, with the word Rama in similar characters. For the purpose of meditation, the Bairagi squats on the ground, sometimes with a deer or tiger skin beneath him, and rests his hands on the cross-piece of his **yogadandam**, or bent stick. A pair of tongs is stuck in the ground on his right side, and sometimes fire is kept near it.

It is noted by Mr. J. C. Oman\* that "a most elaborate ritual has been laid down for the guidance of Bairagis in the daily routine of the indispensable business and duties of life, prescribing in minute detail how, for example, the ascetic should wash, bathe, sit down, perform **pranayam** (stoppage or regulation of respiration), purify his body, purge his mind, meditate on Vishnu, repeat the **Gayatri** (hymn) as composed for the special use of members of the sect, worship **Rama**, **Sita**, **Lakshman**, **Bharata**, and **Satringah**, together with Rama's bows and arrows, and, lastly, the monkey god





Hanuman."

The Bairagis have a guru or priest, whom they call Mahant. Some visit the celebrated temple near Tirupati and pay their respects to the Mahant thereof.

**Baisya.**—A sub-division of **Koronos** of Ganjam.

**Baita Kammara.**—The name, meaning outside blacksmiths, applied to Kamsala blacksmiths, who occupy a lowly position, and work in the open air or outside a village.\*

\* Madras Census Report, 1901

**Bajantri.**—A synonym of Mangala, indicating their occupation as professional musicians.

**Bakta.**—See Bagata.

**Bakuda.**—A sub-division of Holey.

**Balanollu.**—Balanollu and Badranollu are names of gotras of Ganigas, the members of which may not cut *Erythroxylon monogynum*.

**Balasantosh.**—The Balasantosh or



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Balasanta vandlu (those who please children) are described in the Kurnool Manual as "ballad reciters, whose chief stories are the **Bobbili katha**, or the story of the siege of the fort of Bobbili in Vizagapatam by Bussy ; the Kurnool Nabob's katha or the story of the resumption of Kurnool by the English ; and the tale of the quarrels between Ganga and Parvati, the two wives of Siva."

**Balegara** (bangle man).—An occupational subdivision of Banajiga.

**Baliya**.—The Baliyas are described by Mr. Francis \* as being "the chief Telugu trading caste, scattered throughout all parts of the Presidency. It is said to have two main subdivisions, **Desa** (or Kota, a fort) and **Peta** (street). The first of these includes those, whose ancestors are supposed to have been the Baliya (Nayak) kings of Madura, Tanjore and Vijayanagar, or provincial governors in those kingdoms; and to the second belong those, like the Gazulu (bangle sellers) and Perike



(salt sellers), who live by trade.

\* Madras Census Report, 1901

“In the Tamil districts, Balijas are known as **Vadugans** (Telugu people) and **Kavarais**. The descendants of the Nayak or Balija Kings of Madura and Tanjore claim to be Kshatriyas and of the Kasyapa (a rishi) gotra, while the Vijayanagar Rais say they are lineal descendants of the sage Bharadwaja.

“Others trace their ancestry to the **Kauravas** of the Mahabharata. This Kshatriya descent is, however, **not admitted by other castes**, who say that Balijas are an offshoot of the **Kammas** or Kapus, or that they are a mixed community recruited from these and other Telugu castes.

“The members of the caste none of them now wear the sacred thread, or follow the Vedic ritual. The name **Kartakkal** (governors) was returned by those who claim to be descendants of the Nayak Kings of Madura and Tanjore.”





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In a letter submitted, from Coimbatore, to Mr. Francis in connection with the census, 1901, it was stated that "the Baliya people are Kshatriyas of the Lunar Race, as can be proved by a reference to the Bahgavatham, Vishnupuranam, and Brahmmandapuram, etc

“In this connection, it will be interesting to note that one Sevappa Naidu married Murthiammal, sister-in-law to Achuta Deva Rayulu of Narapathi Samasthanam of Vijayanagar, and as a marriage portion or dowry received the territory of Tanjore, over which he ruled as king for a long period. It was at this time that the celebrated **Tirumalay Naidu** of Madura took as wife one of the daughters of Sevappa Naidu's family. Tirumalay's grandson, one Chockalinga Naidu, married Mangammal, daughter of Vijiaragavulu Naidu, a grandson of the said Tanjore Sevappa Naidu. It will thus be seen that the Naidu rulers of Tanjore, Trichinopoly, and Madura, were all relations of Narapathi Samasthanam of Vijianagar.



“That these Narapathies of Vijianagaram were Kshatriyas of the Lunar Race can be clearly seen by a reference to **Manucharithra**, **Parijathapaharanam**, **Prouda Prabanda Kavi Charitra**, etc., and that they were direct descendants of the great Andra Kings can be proved with equal satisfaction by referring to Colonel Mackenzie's MSS., in the introduction of A. D. Campbell's Telugu Grammar, and James Prinsep's Useful Tables of Andra Kings will show that the Andras were immediate descendants of the well-known **Yayathi** Raja of the Lunar Race.”

"The Balijas," Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,\* " are the trading caste of the Telugu country, but they are now found in every part of the Presidency. Concerning the origin of this caste several traditions exist, but the most probable is that which represents them as a recent offshoot of the **Kapu** or **Reddi** caste. The caste is rather a mixed one, for they will admit, without much scruple, persons who have been **expelled from**



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their proper caste, or who are the result of irregular unions.

The bulk of the Balijas are now engaged in cultivation, and this accounts for so many having returned Kapu as their main caste, for Kapu is also a common Telugu word used for a ryot (farmer). It is not improbable that there was once a closer connection than now between the Kapus and the Balijas, and the claim of the Balijas to belong to the Kapu caste may have a foundation in fact. In their customs there is very little difference between the Kapus and Balijas. Their girls are married both before and after puberty. The re-marriage of widows is forbidden. They eat flesh, and alcohol is said to be freely indulged in [There is a proverb '*If a man be born a Balija, he must crack the arrack bottle*'].

Like the Bogams and Sanis, the Balija females usually wear a petticoat instead of the long robe of ordinary Hindus. The general name of the caste is Naidu."





“The Baliya Naidu,” it has been said,\* " is to be met with in almost every walk of life—railway station-masters, head coolies, bakers, butlers, municipal inspectors, tappal (post) runners, hawkers, and hotel-keepers. The title Chetti is by some used in preference to Naidu."

\* A Native : Ten and Ink Sketches of South India.

It is noted in the Bellary Manual that the Baliyas "have by common consent obtained a high place in the social system of South India. Some are land-owners, residing on and working their own property with the help of members of inferior castes ; but the majority live by trade."

At Tirupati, a number of Baliya families are engaged in the red sanders wood (*Pterocarpus santalinus*), carving industry. Figures of swamis (deities), mythological figures, elephants, and miniature temple cars with flying cherubs and winged horses, are most abundantly carved : but domestic utensils in the shape of **chembus**, **kinnis**, **cups**, **plates**, etc., are turned on the



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lathe. Large vessels are sometimes made of the wood of **vepi** or **achamaram** (*Hardwickia binata*), which resembles red Sanders wood, but is more liable to crack. The carved figures are sold to pilgrims and others who visit Tirupati, and are also taken to Conjeeveram, Madura, and other places, at times when important temple festivals are celebrated.

Vessels made of **red sanders wood carry no pollution**, and can be used by women during the menstrual period, and taken back to the house without any purification ceremony. **For the same reason, Sanyasis (ascetics) use such vessels for doing puja.**

The name Baliya is said to be derived from the Sanskrit **bali** (a sacrifice) and **ja** (born), signifying that the Baliyas owe their origin to the performance of a yagam.

The legend is current that on one occasion Siva wanted his consort Parvati to appear before him in all her glory. But, when she stood before him, fully decorated, he laughed, and



said that she was not as charming as she might be. On this, she prayed that Siva would help her to become so. From his braid of hair Siva created a being who descended on the earth, bearing a number of bangles and turmeric paste, with which Parvati adorned herself. Siva, being greatly pleased with her appearance, told her to look at herself in a looking-glass. The being, who brought the bangles, is believed to have been the ancestor of the **Gazula** Baliyas.

According to another version of the legend, Parvati was not satisfied with her appearance when she saw herself in the looking-glass, and asked her father to tell her how she was to make herself more attractive. He accordingly prayed to Brahma, who ordered him to perform a severe penance (thapas).

From the sacrificial fire, kindled in connection therewith, arose a being leading a donkey laden with heaps of bangles, turmeric, palm leaf rolls for the ears, black beads, sandal powder, a comb, perfumes, etc. From this **Maha Purusha**





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who thus sprang from a sacrifice (bali), the Balijas derixed their origin and name. To him, in token of respect, were given Hags, torches, and certain musical instruments.

The **Desayis**, or leaders of the right-hand faction, are said to be Balijas by caste. In former days they had very great influences, and all

castes belonging to the right-hand faction would obey the **Desayi Chetti**. Even at the present day, the Oddes and others refer their disputes to the Desayi, and not to their own caste headman.



GAZULA BALIJA WITH BANGLES.

In former times there were three principal Desayis, who had their head-quarters at Conjeeveram, Cuddalore, and Walajapet. The head Desayi possesses a **biruthu** (insigne of office) in the form of a large brass ladle with a bell attached to it.

On the occasion of Baliya marriages and funerals, this is sent through the **Chalavathi** (a



pariah), who is the servant of the Desayi, and has the right of **allu eduththal** (taking a handful) when he goes to the bazaar, where he receives meat from the butcher, vegetables, etc., as his perquisite. The Desayi's ladle is kept in the custody of the Chalavathi (See Desayi).

The Balijas, Mr. Stuart writes,\* “employ Brahmans and **Satanis** as their priests. The chief object of their worship is **Gauri**, their caste deity. It is said that the Malas are the hereditary custodians of the idol of Gauri and her jewels, which the Balijas get from them whenever they want to worship her.

“The following story is told to account for this. The Kapus and Balijas, molested by the Muhammadan invaders on the north of the northern Pennar, migrated to the south when the **Pennar** was in full flood. Being unable to cross the river, they invoked their deity to make a passage for them, for which it demanded the sacrifice of a first-born child. While they stood at a loss what to do, the Malas who followed them



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boldly offered one of their children to the goddess. Immediately the river divided before them, and the Kapus and the Baliyas crossed it, and were saved from the tyranny of the Muhammadans. Ever since that time, the Malas have been respected by the Kapus and Baliyas, and the latter even deposited the images of Gauri, the bull and Ganesa, which they worshipped, in the house of a Mala.

“I am credibly informed that the practice of leaving these images in the custody of Malas is even now observed in some parts of the Cuddapah district and elsewhere.”

Of the numerous sub-divisions of the Baliyas, the following may be noticed : —

**Gazula, glass bangles.** **Valaiyal** or vala (bangle) Chetti is the Tamil equivalent. By some the sight of a Gazula Balija with his pile of bangles on his back is considered a good omen. In recent years, a scare has arisen in connection with an insect, which is said to take up its abode in imported German glass





bangles, which compete with the indigenous industry of the Gazulas. The insect is believed to lie low in the bangle till it is purchased, when it comes out and nips the wearer, after warning her to get her affairs in order before succumbing. A specimen of a broken bangle, from which the insect is stated to have burst forth and stung a girl in the wrist, was sent to me. But the insect was not forthcoming.

**Gandavallu, or Gundapodi vandlu.** Go about the villages, hawking turmeric, kunkumam (colour powder), kamela (*Mallotus philippinensis*) dye powder, beads, combs, cosmetics and other articles. Supposed to have been originally Komatis.

**Kavarai**, Tamil synonym for Baliya.

**Linga.**

**Panchama.** Telugu or Telaga. A synonym for Baliya in the Northern Circars.

**Rajamahendram or Musu Kamma.** The former denotes the town of Rajahmundry, and



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the latter a special ear-ornament worn by women.

**Tota**, garden.

**Ralla**, precious stones.

**Pagadala**, coral.

**Pusa**, beads.

**Racha**, royal.

**Vyasa**. A sage (rishi) or hunter, whom the hunting classes claim as their ancestor

Other sub-divisions, classified as Baliyas at the census, 1901, were:

**Jakkulas**, among whom it was, at Tenali in the Kistna district, formerly customary for each family to give up one girl for prostitution. Under the influence of social reform, [a written agreement was a few years ago entered into to give up the practice.](#)

**Adapapa**. Female attendants on the ladies of the families of Zamindars, [who, as they are not allowed to marry, lead a life of prostitution.](#) Their sons call themselves Baliyas. In some



places, e.g., the Kistna and Godavari districts, this class is known as Khasa or Khasavandlu.

**Santa Kavarai.** Returned as Baliyas in the Chingleput district. Ravut. Returned in the Salem district. Said to have been formerly soldiers under the Poligars.

Like other Telugu castes, the Baliyas have exogamous septs (**intiperu**) and gotras. Of the former, the following are examples :

Tupakala, Samudra  
musket. m, ocean.

Pappu, Gantla,  
split pulse. bell.

Puli, tiger. Balli,  
lizard.

Avula, Gandha  
cow. m, sandal  
paste





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or powder. Jilakara,  
cummin  
seeds.

Miriyala, Mutyala,  
pepper. pearls.

Narikcila, Nemili,  
cocoanut. peacock.

Pagadala, Pattindla  
coral. , silk  
house.

Ratnala, Ungarala  
precious , rings.  
stones.

Yenumala  
, buffalo.

There is a saying that a Baliya who has no gotra must take the name of the **Pasuleti**, or Pasupuleti gotra.

In like manner, a Brahman orphan, whose gotra cannot be traced, is made to adopt the



Vathsa gotra. Among the **Musu Kammās**, the consent of both the maternal uncle and elder sister's husband must be obtained before a girl is given in marriage. At the betrothal ceremony, the future bridegroom's relations proceed to the house of the girl, carrying the following articles on an odd number of trays beneath a cloth canopy (**ulladam**) : mustard, fenugreek (*Trigonella Fœnumgræcum*), cummin seeds, curds, jaggery, dhal (*Cajanus indicus*), balls of condiments, tamarinds, pepper, twenty-one cakes, eleven cocoanuts, salt, plantains, flowers, a new cloth, black beads, a palm-leaf roll for the ear lobe, turmeric, a comb, and kunkumam (colour powder).

A few rupees, called **kongu mudi**, to be given to the future mother-in-law, are also placed on the tray. The contracting parties exchange betel and a cocoanut, of which the latter is taken away by a member of the bridegroom's party, tied up in his body-cloth. The girl is seated on a plank, goes through the ceremony (**nalagu**) of



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being anointed with oil and paste, and is presented with a new cloth. Wearing this, she sits on the plank, and betel, flowers, jewels, etc., are placed in her lap. A near female relation then ties a string of black beads round her neck.

Among the Musu Kammas, the milk-post, consisting of a green bamboo, with sometimes a branch of *Odina Wodier*, must be set up two days before the commencement of the marriage ceremonies. It is worshipped, and to it are tied an iron ring, and a string of cotton and wool twisted together (**kankanam**). A small framework, called **dhornam**, made of two sticks, across which cotton threads or pieces of cloth are stretched, is brought by a washerwoman, and given to the maternal uncle of the bridegroom, who ties it to the marriage booth. The marriage pots are brought from a potter's house beneath a cloth canopy (*ulladam*), and given to married couples, closely related to the bridegroom, who fetch water, and place the pots





on the dais. Some married women pour rice on a clean white cloth spread on the floor, and rub off the bran with their hands, while they sing songs. The cloth to be worn by the bridegroom is dipped in turmeric water by these women and dried.

The Balijas are very particular about the worship of their female ancestors (**perantalu**) and no auspicious ceremony can be commenced until **perantalu puja** has been performed.

Among the Musu Kammas, five women, who are closely related to the bridal couple, take only one meal a day, and try to keep free from pollution of all sorts. They go through the nalagu ceremony, and are presented with new cloths. Among other sections, the wall is simply painted with turmeric dots to represent the ancestors. The ancestor worship concluded, the finger and toe-nails of the bridegroom are cut, and a Musu Kamma bridegroom is conducted to a temple of Vigneswara (Ganesa), if there is one near at



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hand. By other sections it is considered sufficient, if Vigneswara worship is performed at the marriage booth.

The Musu Kamma bridegroom is dressed up at the temple, and a **bashingam** (chaplet) tied on his forehead. An old-fashioned turban (**paghai**) is placed on his head, and a dagger (**jimthadu**) stuck into his waist-cloth.

It is said that, in olden times, the Baliyas used to worship the dagger, and sacrifice sheep or goats at marriages. The bridegroom is next brought to the house where the wedding is being celebrated, and his brother-in-law washes his feet, and, after throwing flowers and rice over them, puts toe-rings and shoes thereon.

The Brahman purohit lights the sacred fire (homam), and pours ghi (clarified butter) therein, while he utters some verses, Vedic or other. He then ties the kankanam (thread) on the bridegroom's wrist. The parents of the bride next proceed with the **dharadhattam** (gift of the girl) by pouring water and grains of rice into the



hands of the bridegroom. Vigneswara is then worshipped, and the **bottu** (marriage badge) is blessed by those assembled, and handed to the bridegroom. He, placing his right foot on that of the bride, who is separated from him by a screen, ties it round her neck. The couple then exchange seats, and rice is thrown in front of them. They next go thrice round the dais and milk-post, and, at the end of the first and second rounds, the foot of the bride is placed on a grinding stone. After the third round they gaze at the pole-star (Arundati).

Into one of the marriage pots are put a pap-bowl, ring, and bracelet, which are picked out by the couple. If the pap-bowl is first got hold of by the bridegroom, **the first-born child will be a boy ; if the ring, it will be a girl.**

This rite concluded, the bridegroom makes a mark on the bride's forehead with collyrium. On the second day, the bridegroom makes a pretence of being angry, and stays in a garden or house near that in which the marriage





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ceremonies are conducted. The bride, and some of her relations, go to him in procession, and, treating him with great respect, bring him back. The sacred fire is lighted, and the bride enters the room in which the marriage pots (**araveni**) are kept. The bridegroom is stopped at the entrance thereto by a number of married women, and has to call his wife by her name, and pay a small sum of money for the **arathi** (coloured water), which is waved by the women, to ward off the evil eye.

In some places, the sister of the bridegroom extracts a promise that his **coral (daughter) shall be given in marriage to her pearl** (son).

He is then permitted to enter the room. On the third day, after homam has been performed by the Brahman priest, the newly married couple go through a burlesque imitation of domestic life, after they have worshipped the posts of the booth, and perform a mimic ploughing ceremony, the bridegroom stirring up some earth in a basket with a stick or miniature



plough. This, in some places, his sister tries to prevent him from doing by covering the basket with a cloth, and he has to say “I will give my coral to your pearl.”

His brother-in-law tries to squeeze his fingers between a pair of sticks called **kitti**, which was, in former times, a very popular form of torture as a means of extracting confession. The bride gives her husband some **conji** (rice-gruel) to refresh him after his pretended labour.

At a marriage among the **Perikes** (*q.v.*), a gunny-bag is said to be worshipped before the bottu is tied. A quantity of rice is measured on the first day of the ceremonies and tied up in a cloth. On the third day, the cloth is opened, and it is considered an auspicious sign if the quantity of rice exceeds that which was originally put into it.

Among the **Rajamahendram Baliyas**, just before the nalagu ceremony, the knees, shoulders, and cheeks of the bride and bridegroom are touched with a pestle, while the



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names of their septs are called out. On the third day, the same process is repeated, but in the reverse order. A Gazula Baliya bride must, when the bottu is tied, be dressed in a white cloth with red stripes, called **sanna pappuli**.

With other sections, a white cloth dyed with turmeric is *de rigeur*.

Baliya, it may be noted, is, in the North Arcot Manual, returned as a division of Dasaris and **Idigas**. The better classes of **Medaras** (cane-splitters and mat-makers) are also taking to calling themselves Baliyas, and assume the title Chetti.

Oddes and Upparas sometimes style themselves Odde Baliya and Uppara Baliya. They belong to the right-hand section, which is headed by the Desayi, who is a Baliya, and so describe themselves as belonging to the **Setti** or **Chetti samayam**. Some members of the Mila and Vada fishing castes have adopted Oda or Vada (boat) Baliya as their caste name.





**Ballala.**—Ballala, or Bellala, was returned, at the census, 1901, as the caste name of a number of individuals, indicating their claim to descent from the Hoysal Ballal kings of Mysore. Ballal is a title assumed by **Bant** families of position. There is a proverb that, **when a Bant becomes powerful, he becomes a Ballal.**\*

\* Manual of the S. Canara district.

**Ballem** (spear).—An exogamous sept of Mala.

**Balli** (lizard).—An exogamous sept of Baliya.

**Balolika.**—A synonym of Rajapuri.

**Balu** (bear).—A sept of Domb.

**Bana** (big pot).—An exogamous sept of Togatas, and a name for Telugu washermen, who are sometimes called **Bana Tsakala**. Bana is the Telugu name for the pot which they use for boiling the clothes in.

**Banajiga** (vanik, tradesman).—Canarese traders, many of whom are Lingayats. See



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Linga Baliya.

**Banda.**—Banda, as applied to the Mondri mendicant class, seems to be used in the sense of an obstinate fellow. Some, however, maintain that it refers to a beggar who carries about a stone, and threatens to beat his brains out, if alms are not forthcoming. Banda, meaning a rock, also occurs as an exogamous sept of Odde.

**Bandari.**—Bandari, denoting apparently the shrub *Dodondœa viscosa*, is an exogamous sept of Odde. It further occurs, in the sense of a temple treasurer, as an exogamous sept of Devangas and Padma Sales, for whom the Bandari acts as caste messenger. It is also the name of the assistant to the headman, or **Pattakar**, of the Okkiliyans, a title of Konkani Brahmans, and a synonym of Kelasis.

**Bandekara.**—A synonym for Konkani Vanis (traders), who are said, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, to ape the Brahmanical customs, and call themselves by the curious hybrid name



of Vasiya (or Vaisya) Brahman.

**Bandi** (cart).—An exogamous sept of Kapu, Kavarai, Korava, Kumbara, Kurni, Kuruba, Mala, Odde, Stanika, and Yanadi. It further occurs as a name for Koravas, who drag the temple car at times of religious festival.

**Vandikkaran** (cartmen) is an occupational name for Nayars, who work as cartmen for carrying fuel.

**Bangaru Mukkara** (gold nose ornament).—A subdivision of Kamma.

**Baniya**.—The Baniyas or Bunyas are immigrant traders and money-lenders (sowcars) from Northern India, who have settled down in the southern bazars, where they carry on a lucrative business, and wax sleek and wealthy. Bania also occurs as a synonym for the South Indian trading caste, the Komatis.

It may be noted, as a little matter of history, that, in 1677, the Court of Directors, in a letter to Fort St. George, offered " twenty pounds reward





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to any of our servants or soldiers as shall be able to speak, write, and translate the Banian language, and to learn their arithmetic."\*

\* Vule and Burnell. liobson-Jobson.

**Banjari.**—A synonym of Lambadi.

**Banka** (gum).—An exogamous sept of Motati Kapu.

**Bannagara** (a painter).—A synonym of Chitrakara.

**Bannan.**—A synonym of Vannan or Mannan, recorded at times of census. In like manner Bannata occurs as a Canarese form of the Malayalam Veluttedan or Vannattan.

**Banni** or **Vanni** (*Prosopis spicigcra*).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba and Kurni. The tree is worshipped because on it "the five Pandava princes hung up their arms when they entered **Virat Nagra** in disguise. On the tree the arms turned to snakes, and remained untouched till the owners returned." (*Lisboa.*)



**Bant.**—For the following account of the Bants I am mainly indebted to Mr. H. A. Stuart's description of them in the Manual of South Canara, The name Bant, pronounced Bunt, means in Tulu a powerful man or soldier, and indicates that the Bants were originally [a military class corresponding to the Nayars of Malabar](#). The term Nadava instead of Bant in the northern portions of South Canara points, among other indications, to a territorial organisation by nads similar to that described by Mr. Logan as prevailino- in Malabar.

"The Nayars," he writes, "were, until the British occupied the country, the militia of the district. Originally they seem to have been organised into 'Six Hundreds,' and each six hundred seems to have had assigned to it the protection of all the people in a **nad** or country. The nad was in turn split up into **taras**, a Dravidian word signifying originally a foundation, the foundation of a house, hence applied collectively to a street, as in Tamil **teru**,



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in Telugu **teruvu**, and in Canarese and Tulu **teravu**. The tara was the Nayar territorial unit for civil purposes."

It has been stated that "the Malabar Nair chieftain of old had his nad or barony, and his own military class ; and the relics of this powerful feudal system still survive in the names of some of the taluks (divisions) of modern Malabar, and in the official designations of certain Nair families, whose men still come out with quaint-looking swords and shields to guard the person of the Zamorin on the occasion of the rice-throwing ceremony, which formally constitutes him the ruler of the land.

“Correspondingly, the Bants of the northern parts of Canara still answer to the territorial name of Nad Bants, or warriors of the nad or territory. It is necessary to explain that, in both ancient Keralam and Tulu, the functions of the great military and dominant classes were so distributed that only certain classes were bound to render military service to the ruling prince.





The rest were lairds or squires, or gentleman farmers, or the labourers and artisans of their particular community, though all of them cultivated a love of manly sports."\*

\* Calcutta Review.

Few traces of any such organisation as has been indicated now prevail, great changes having been made when the Vijayanagar Government introduced, more than five hundred years ago, a system of administration under which the local Jain chiefs, though owing allegiance to an overlord, became more independent in their relations with the people of the country. Under the **Bednur** kings, and still more under the Mysore rule, the power of the chiefs was also swept away, but the old organisation was not reverted to.

The Bants are now the chief land-owning and cultivating class in South Canara, and are, with the exception of the **Billavas** or toddy-drawers, the most numerous caste in the district.



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“At the present day, the Bants of Canara are largely the independent and influential landed gentry, some would say, perhaps, the substantial yeomanry. They still retain their manly independence of character, their strong and well developed physique, and they still carry their heads with the same haughty toss as their forefathers did in the stirring fighting days when, as an old proverb had it, *'The slain rested in the yard of the slayer,'* and when every warrior constantly carried his sword and shield. Both men and women of the Bant community are among the comeliest of Asiatic races, the men having high foreheads and well-turned aquiline noses.”

In a note on the agricultural economy of South Canara, Rao Sahib T. Raghaviah writes\* that "the ryot (cultivator) of South Canara loves to make his land look attractive, and every field is lined with the lovely areca, and the stately palm. The slopes adjoining the rich fields are studded with plantations of jack, mango,



cashew, plantain and other fruit and shade trees, and the ryot would not even omit to daub his trees with the alternate white and red bands, with which the east coast women love to adorn a marriage house or temple wall. These, with the regularly laid out and carefully embanked water-courses and streams, lend an air of enchantment to the whole scene. The ignorance prevailing among the women of the richer section of the landed classes (on the east coast) is so great that it is not uncommon to ridicule a woman by saying that what she knows about paddy (rice) is that it grows on a tree. But, in a district like South Canara, the woman that does not know agriculture is the exception. I have often come across respectable women of the landed classes like the Bants, Shivallis, and Nairs, managing large landed estates as efficiently as men. The South Canara woman is born on the land, and lives on it. She knows when to sow, and when to reap ; how much seed to sow, and how much labour to employ to





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plough, to weed, or to reap. She knows how to prepare her seed, and to cure her tobacco, to garner her grain, and to preserve her cucumbers through the coming monsoon. She knows further how to feed her cow, and to milk it, to treat it when sick, and to graze it when hale. She also knows how to make her manure, and how to use it without wasting a bit of it. She knows how to collect green leaves for her manure, and to help the fuel reserve on the hill slope above her house grow by a system of lopping the branches and leaving the standards. She knows also how to collect her areca nuts, and to prepare them for the market, and to collect her cocoanuts, and haggle for a high price for them with her customers. There is, in fact, not a single thing about agriculture which the South Canara man knows, and which the South Canara woman does not know. It is a common sight, as one passes through a paddy Hat or along the adjoining slope, to see housewives bringing out handfuls of ashes



collected in the oven over night, and depositing them at the root of the nearest fruit tree on their land."

\* Indian Review, VII, 1906.

Most of the Bants are Hindus by religion, and rank as Sudras, but about ten thousand of them are Jains. Probably they originally assumed Jainism as a fashionable addition to the ancestral demon worship, to which they all still adhere, whether they profess to be Vaishnavites, Saivites, or Jains. It is probable that, during the political supremacy of the Jains, a much larger proportion of the Bants professed adherence to that religion than now--days. There are four principal sub-divisions of the caste, viz., **Masadika**, who are the ordinary Bants of Tuluva ; **Nadava** or Nad, who speak Canarese, and are found in the northern part of South Canara ; the **Parivara**, who do not follow the **aliya santana** system of inheritance; and the Jains.



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Members of these sub-divisions may not intermarry, but instances have occurred of marriage between members of the Masadika and Nad subdivisions. Nothing very definite is known of the origin of the Bants, but Tuluva seems, in the early centuries of the Christian era, to have had kings who apparently were sometimes independent and sometimes feudatories of overlords, such as the Pallavas, the early Kadambas, the early Chalukyans, the later Kadambas, the western Chalukyans, the Kalachurians, and the Hoysal Ballals.

This indicates a constant state of fighting, which would account for an important class of the population being known as **Bantaru** or warriors ; and, as a matter of course, they succeeded in becoming the owners of all the land which did not fall to the share of the priestly class, the Brahmans. Ancient inscriptions speak of kings of Tuluva, and the **Bairasu Wodears** of Karakal, whose inscriptions have been found at Kalasa as early as the twelfth century, may





have exercised power throughout Tuluva or the greater part of it. But, when the Vijayanagar dynasty became the overlords of Canara in 1336, there were then existing a number of minor chiefs who had probably been in power long before, and the numerous titles still remaining among the Bants and Jains, and the local dignities known as **Pattam** and **Gadi**, point to the existence from very early times of a number of more or less powerful local chieftains.

The system peculiar to the west coast under which all property vests in females, and is managed by the seniors of the family, was also favourable to the continuance of large landed properties, and it is probable that it is only within comparatively recent times that sub-division of landed property became anything like as common as it is now.

All the Bants, except the Parivara and a few Jains follow this aliya santana system of inheritance,\* a survival of a time when the



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military followers of conquering invaders or local chiefs married women of the local land-owning classes, and the most important male members of the family were usually absent in camp or at court, while the women remained at the family house on the estate, and managed the farms. The titles and the **pattams** or dignities have always been held by the male members, but, as they also go with the landed property, they necessarily devolve on the sister's son of a deceased holder, whence has arisen the name aliya santana, which means sister's son lineage.

\* See G. Krishna Kao. Treatise on Aliya Santana Law and Usage, Mangalore, 1898

A story is embodied in local traditions, attributing the origin of the system to the fiat of a king named **Bhotal Pandya**, until whose time **makkala santana** or inheritance from father to son, generally obtained.

"It is said that the maternal uncle of this prince, called **Deva Pandya**, wanted to launch



his newly constructed ships with valuable cargo in them, when **Kundodara**, king of demons demanded a human sacrifice. Deva Pandya asked his wife's permission to offer one of his sons, but she refused, while his sister Satyavati offered her son Jaya Pandya for the purpose. Kundodara, discovering in the child signs of future greatness, waived the sacrifice, and permitted the ships to sail. He then took the child, restored to him his father's kingdom of Jayantika, and gave him the name of Bhutal Pandya. Subsequently, when some of the ships brought immense wealth, the demon again appeared, and demanded of Deva Pandya another human sacrifice. On the latter again consulting his wife, she refused to comply with the request, and publicly renounced her title and that of her children to the valuable property brought in the ships. Kundodara then demanded the Deva Pandya to disinherit his sons of the wealth which had been brought in the ships, as also of the kingdom, and to bestow





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all on his sister's son, Jaya or Bhutal Pandya. This was accordingly done. And, as this prince inherited his kingdom from his maternal uncle and not from his father, he ruled that his own example should be followed by his subjects, and it was thus that the aliya santana law was established about A.D. 77\*"

\* Calcutta Review.

It is noted by Mr. L. Moore\* that various judicial decisions relating to the aliya santana system are based to a great extent on a book termed **Aliya Santanada Kattu Kattale**, which was alleged to be the work of **Bhutala Pandiya**, who, according to Dr. Whitley Stokes, the learned scholar who edited the first volume of the Madras High Court Reports, lived about A.D. 78, but which is in reality a very recent forgery compiled about 1840.

\* Malabar Law and Custom, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1905.

As to this, Dr. A. C. Burnell observes as



follows in a note in his law of partition and succession. “One patent imposture yet accepted by the Courts as evidence is the *Aliya Santanada Kattu Kattale*, a falsified account of the customs of South Canara. Silly as many Indian books are, a more childish or foolish tract it would be impossible to discover ; it is about as much worthy of notice in a law court as 'Jack the Giant Killer.' That it is a recent forgery is certain .... The origin of the book in its present state is well-known ; it is satisfactorily traced to two notorious forgers and scoundrels about thirty years ago, and all copies have been made from the one they produced, I have enquired in vain for an old manuscript, and am informed, on the best authority, that not one exists. A number of recent manuscripts are to be found, but they all differ essentially one from another.

“A more clumsy imposture it would be hard to find, but it has proved a mischievous one in South Canara, and threatens to render a large amount of property quite valueless. The forgers



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knew the people they had to deal with, the Bants, and, by inserting a course that families which did not follow the Aliya Santana shall become extinct, have effectually prevented an application for legislative interference, though the poor superstitious folk would willingly (it is said) have the custom abolished." \*

\* The Law of Partition and Succession, from the text of Varadaraja's Vyavaharaniranya by A. C. Burnell (1872).

As a custom similar to **aliya santana** prevails in Malabar, it no doubt originated before Tuluva and Kerala were separated.

The small body of Parivara Bants, and the few Jain Bants that do not follow the aliya santana system, are probably the descendants of a few families who allowed their religious conversion to Hinduism or Jainism to have more effect on their social relations than was commonly the case. Now that the ideas regarding marriage among the Bants are in





practice assimilated to a great extent to those of most other people, the national rule of inheritance is a cause of much heart-burning and quarrelling, fathers always endeavouring to benefit their own offspring at the cost of the estate.

A change would be gladly welcomed by many, but vested interests in property constitute an almost insuperable obstacle.



KAMBILA BUFFALO RACE.

The Bants do not usually object to the use of animal food, except, of course, the flesh of the cow, and they do not as a rule wear the sacred thread. But there are some families of position called Ballals, amongst whom heads of families abstain from animal food, and wear the sacred thread.

These neither eat nor intermarry with the ordinary Bants. The origin of the Ballals is explained by a proverb, which says that when a Bant becomes powerful, he becomes a Ballal. Those who have the dignity called Pattam, and



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the heads of certain families, known as **Shettivalas** or **Heggades**, also wear the sacred thread, and are usually managers or mukhtesars of the temples and bhutasthans or demon shrines within the area over which, in former days, they are said to have exercised a more extended jurisdiction, dealing not only with caste disputes, but settling numerous civil and criminal matters. The Jain Bants are strict vegetarians, and they abstain from the use of alcoholic liquors, the consumption of which is permitted among other Bants, though the practice is not common. The Jain Bants avoid taking food after sunset.

The more well-to-do Bants usually occupy substantial houses on their estates, in many of which there is much fine wood-work, and, in some cases, the pillars of the porches and verandahs, and the doorways are artistically and elaborately carved. These houses have been described as being well built, thatched with palm, and generally prettily situated with



beautiful scenic prospects stretching away on all sides.

The Bants have not as a rule largely availed themselves of European education, and consequently there are but few of them in the Government service, but among these few some have attained to high office, and been much respected. As is often the case among high spirited people of primitive modes of thought, party and faction feeling run high, and jealousy and disputes about landed property often lead to hasty acts of violence.

Now-a-days, however, the last class of disputes more frequently lead to protracted litigation in the Courts.

The Bants are fond of out-door sports, football and buffalo-racing being amongst their favourite amusements. But the most popular of all is cock-fighting. Every Bant, who is not a Jain, takes an interest in this sport, and large assemblages of cocks are found at every fair and festival throughout South Canara.





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“The outsider,” it has been said,\* “cannot fail to be struck with the tremendous excitement that attends a village fair in South Canara. Large numbers of cocks are displayed for sale, and groups of excited people may be seen huddled together, bending down with intense eagerness to watch every detail in the progress of a combat between two celebrated village game-cocks.”

\* Calcutta Review

Cock fights on an elaborate scale take place on the day after the **Dipavali**, **Sankaranthi** or **Vinayakachathurthi**, and **Gokalashtami** festivals, outside the village boundary.

At **Hiriadaka**, in October, 1907, more than a hundred birds were tethered by the leg to the scrub jungle composed of the evergreen shrub *Ixora coccinea*, or carried in the arms of their owners or youngsters. Only males, from the town and surrounding villages, were witnesses of the spectacle. The tethered birds, if within



range of each other, excited by the constant crowing and turmoil, indulged in an impromptu fight.

Grains of rice and water were poured into the mouths and over the heads of the birds before the fight, and after each round. The birds were armed with **cunningly devised steel spurs**, constituting a battery of variously curved and sinuous weapons. It is believed that the Bhuta (demon) is appeased, if the blood from the wounds drops on the ground. The men, whose duty it is to separate the birds at the end of a round, sometimes receive nasty wounds from the spurs. The tail feathers of a wounded bird are lifted up, and a palm leaf fan or towel is waved to and fro over the cloacal orifice to revive it. The owner of a victorious bird becomes the possessor of the vanquished bird, dead or alive. At an exhibition of the products of South Canara, during a recent visit of the Governor of Madras to Mangalore, a collection of spurs was exhibited in the class “household

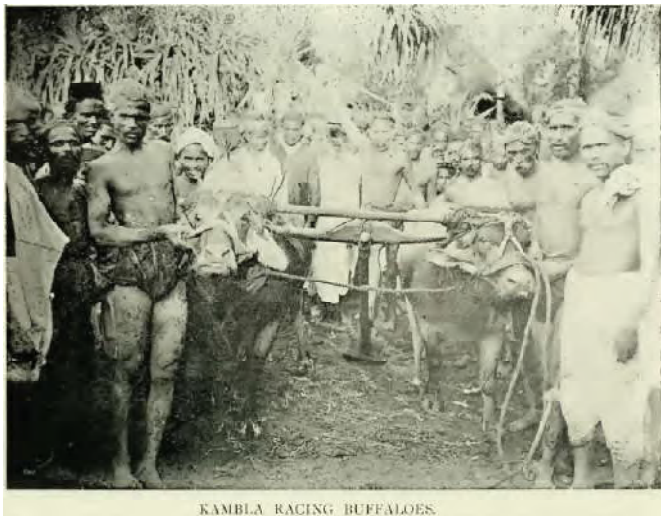


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implements."

For the following note on buffalo races, I am indebted to Mr. H. O. D. Harding. "This is a sport that has grown up among a race of cultivators of wet land. It is, I believe, peculiar to South Canara, where all the cultivation worth mentioning is wet. The Bants and Jains, and other landowners of position, own and run buffaloes, and the Billava, or toddy drawer, has also entered the racing world.



KAMBLA RACING BUFFALOES.

Every rich Bant keeps his **kambla** field consecrated to buffalo-racing, and his pair of racing- buffaloes, costing from Rs. 150 to Rs. 500, are splendid animals; and, except for an occasional plough-drawing at the beginning of the cultivation season, are used for no purpose all the year, except racing.

The racing is for no prize or stakes, and there is no betting, starter, judge, or winning post. Each pair of buffaloes runs the course alone, and is judged by the assembled crowd for pace





and style, and, most important of all, the height and breadth of the splash which they make. Most people know the common levelling plank used by the ryots (cultivators) all over India to level the wet field after ploughing. It is a plank some 4 or 5 feet long by 1 or 1½ feet broad, and on it the driver stands to give it weight, and the buffaloes pull it over the mud of a flooded rice-field. This is the **prototype of the buffalo-racing car**, and any day during the cultivating season in the Tulu country one may see two boys racing for the love of the sport, as they drive their levelling boards.

From this the racing car has been specialised, and, if a work of art for its own purpose, is not a car on which any one could or would wish to travel far. The leveller of utility is cut down to a plank about 1½ by 1 foot, sometimes handsomely carved, on which is fixed a gaily decorated wooden stool about 6 inches high and 10 inches across each way, hollowed out on the top, and just big enough to



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afford good standing for one foot.

In the plank, on each side, are holes to let the mud and water through. The plank is fixed to a pole, which is tied to the buffalo's yoke. The buffaloes are decorated with coloured **jhuls** and marvellous head-pieces of brass and silver (sometimes bearing the emblems of the sun and moon), and ropes which make a sort of bridle. The driver, stripping himself to the necessary minimum of garments, mounts, while some of his friends cling, like ants struggling round a dead beetle, to the buffaloes.

When he is fairly up, they let go, and the animals start. The course is a wet rice-field, about 150 yards long, full of mud and water. All round are hundreds, or perhaps thousands of people, including Pariahs who dance in groups in the mud, play stick-game, and beat drums. In front of the galloping buffaloes the water is clear and still, throwing a powerful reflection of them as they gallop down the course, raising a perfect tornado of mud and water. The driver



stands with one foot on the stool, and one on the pole of the car. He holds a whip aloft in one hand, and one of the buffaloes' tails in the other. He drives without reins, with nothing but a wagging tail to hold on to and steer by.

Opening his mouth wide, he shouts for all he is worth, while, to all appearances, a deluge of mud and water goes down his throat. So he comes down the course, the plank on which he stands throwing up a sort of Prince of Wales' feathers of mud and water round him. The stance on the plank is no easy matter, and not a few men come to grief, but it is soft falling in the slush.

Marks are given for pace, style, sticking to the plank, and throwing up the biggest and widest splash. Sometimes a kind of gallows, perhaps twenty feet high, is erected on the course, and there is a round of applause if the splash reaches up to or above it. Sometimes the buffaloes bolt, scatter the crowd, and get away into the young rice.





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At the end of the course, the driver jumps off with a parting smack at his buffaloes, which run up the slope of the field, and stop of themselves in what may be called the paddock. At a big meeting perhaps a hundred pairs, brought from all over the Tulu country, will compete, and the big men always send their buffaloes to the races headed by the local band.

The roads are alive with horns and tom-toms for several days. The proceedings commence with a procession, which is not infrequently headed by a couple of painted dolls in an attitude suggestive of that **reproductiveness**, which the races really give thanks for. They are a sort of harvest festival, before the second or sugge crop is sown, and are usually held in October and November.

Devils must be propitiated, and the meeting opens with a devil dance. A painted, grass-crowned devil dancer, riding a hobby-horse, proceeds with music round the kambla field. Then comes the buffalo procession, and the



races commence. At a big meeting near Mangalore, the two leading devil dancers were dressed up in masks, and coat and trousers of blue mission cloth, and one had the genitalia represented by a long piece of blue cloth tipped with red, and enormous testes.

Buffaloes, young and old, trained and untrained, compete, some without the plank attached to them, and others with planks but without drivers. Accidents sometimes happen, owing to the animals breaking away among the crowd. On one occasion, a man who was in front of a pair of buffaloes which were just about to start failed to jump clear of them. Catching hold of the yoke, he hung on to it by his hands, and was carried right down the course, and was landed safely at the other end. If he had dropped, he would have fallen among four pairs of hoofs, not to mention the planks, and would probably have been brained. It is often a case of owners up, and the sons and nephews of big Bants, worth perhaps Rs. 10,000 a year, drive



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the teams."

To the above account, I may add a few notes made at a buffalo race-meeting near Udipi, at which I was present. Each group of buffaloes, as they went up the track to the starting-point, was preceded by the **Koraga** band playing on drum, fife and cymbals, **Holeyas** armed with staves and dancing, and a man holding a flag (**nishani**). Sometimes, in addition to the flag, there is a **pakke** or spear on the end of a bamboo covered with strips of cloth, or a **makara torana**, i.e., festooned cloths between two bamboos. The two last are permitted only if the buffaloes belong to a Bant or Brahman, not [if they are the property of a Billava](#).

At the end of the races, the Ballala chief, in whose field they had taken place, retired in procession, headed by a man carrying his banner, which, during the races, had been floating on the top of a long bamboo pole at the far end of the track. He was followed by the Koraga band, and the Holeyas attached to him,





armed with clubs, and dancing a step dance amid discordant noises. Two **Nalkes** (devil-dancers), dressed up in their professional garb, and a torch-bearer also joined in the procession, in the rear of which came the Ballala beneath a decorated umbrella.

In every village there are **rakshasas** (demons), called **Kambla-asura**, who preside over the fields. The races are held to propitiate them, and, if they are omitted, it is believed that there will be a failure of the crop. According to some, Kambla-asura is the brother of **Maheshasura**, the buffalo-headed giant, from whom Mysore receives its name.

The Koragas sit up through the night before the Kambla day, performing a ceremony called **panikkuluni**, or sitting under the dew. They sing songs to the accompaniment of the band, about their devil **Nicha**, and offer toddy and a rice-pudding boiled in a large earthen pot, which is broken so that the pudding remains as a solid mass. This pudding is called **kandel adde**, or



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pot pudding.

On the morning of the races, the Holeyas scatter manure over the field, and plough it. On the following day, the seedlings are planted, without, as in ordinary cases, any ploughing. To propitiate various devils, the days following the races are devoted to cock-fighting.

The Kamblas, in different places, have



various names derived from the village deity, the chief village devil, or the village itself, e.g., **Janardhana Devara**, **Daivala**, or **Udiyavar**. The young men, who have the management of the

buffaloes, are called **Bannangayi Gurikara** (half-ripe cocoanut masters) as they have the right of taking tender cocoanuts, as well as beaten rice to give them physical strength, without the special permission of their landlord.

At the village of **Vandar**, the races take place in a dry field, which has been ploughed, and beaten to break up the clods of earth. For this



reason they are called **podì** (powder) **Kambla**.

A pair of buffaloes, belonging to the field in which the races take place, should enter the field first, and a breach of this observance leads to discussion and quarrels.

On one occasion, a dispute arose between two Bants in connection with the question of precedence. One of them brought his own pair of buffaloes, and the other a borrowed pair. If the latter had brought his own animals, he would have had precedence over the former. But, as his animals were borrowed, precedence was given to the man who brought his own buffaloes. This led to a dispute, and the races were not commenced until the delicate point at issue was decided.

In some places, a long pole, called **pukare**, decorated with flags, flowers, and festoons of leaves, is set up in the Kambla field, sometimes on a platform. Billavas are in charge of this pole, which is worshipped, throughout the races, and others may not touch it. Fines inflicted by the





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Bant caste council are, I am informed, spent in the celebration of a temple festival.

In former days, those found guilty by the council were beaten with tamarind switches, made to stand exposed to the sun, or big red ants were thrown over their bodies. Sometimes, to establish the innocence of an accused person, he had to take a piece of red-hot iron (axe, etc.) in his hand, and give it to his accuser.

At a puberty ceremony among some Bants the girl sits in the courtyard of her house on five unhusked cocoanuts covered with the bamboo cylinder which is used for storing paddy. Women place four pots filled with water, and containing betel leaves and nuts, round the girl, and empty the contents over her head. She is then secluded in an outhouse. The women are entertained with a feast, which must include fowl and fish curry. The cocoanuts are given to a washerwoman. On the fourth day, the girl is bathed, and received back at the house. Beaten



rice, and rice flour mixed with jaggery (crude sugar) are served out to those assembled. The girl is kept **gosha** (secluded) for a time, and fed up with generous diet.

Under the aliya santana system of inheritance, the High Court has ruled that there is no marriage within the meaning of the Penal Code. But, though divorce and remarriage are permitted to women, there are formal rules and ceremonies observed in connection with them, and amongst the well-to-do classes divorce is not looked upon as respectable, and is not frequent. **The fictitious marriage prevailing amongst the Nayars is unknown among the Bants**, and a wife also usually leaves the family house, and resides at her husband's, unless she occupies so senior a position in her own family as to make it desirable that she should live on the family estate.

The Bants are divided into a number of **balis** (exogamous septs), which are traced in the female line, i.e., a boy belongs to his mother's,



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not to his father's bali. Children belonging to the same bali cannot marry, and the prohibition extends to certain allied (**koodu**) balis.

Moreover, a man cannot marry his father's brother's daughter, though she belongs to a different bali. In a memorandum by Mr. M. Mundappa Bangera,\* it is stated that "bali in *aliya santana* families corresponds to gotra of the Brahmins governed by Hindu law, but differs in that it is derived from the mother's side, whereas gotra is always derived from the father's side. A marriage between a boy and girl belonging to the same bali is considered **incestuous**, as falling within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity. It is not at all difficult to find out the bali to which a man or woman belongs, as one can scarcely be found who does not know one's own bali by rote. And the heads of caste, who preside at every wedding party, and who are also consulted by the elders of the boy or girl before an alliance is formed, are such experts in these matters that they





decide at once without reference to any books or rules whether intermarriages between persons brought before them can be lawfully performed or not."

\* Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, 1891.

As examples of balis among the Bants, the following may be cited :

Bellathannaya, jaggery.

Bhuthiannaya, ashes.

Chaliannaya, weaver.

Edinnaya, hornet's nest.

Karkadabennai, scorpion.

Kayerthannaya (*Strychnos Nux-vomica*)

Kochattabannayya, or Kajjarannayya, jack tree (*Artocarpus integrifolia*).

Koriannaya, fowl.

Pathanchithannaya, green peas.

Perugadannaya, bandicoot rat.

Poyilethannaya, one who removes the evil



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eye.

Puliattannaya, tiger.

Ragithannaya, ragi (*Eleusine Coracana*)

Infant marriage is not prohibited, but is not common, and both men and girls are usually married after they have reached maturity. There are two forms of marriage, one called **kai dhare** for marriages between virgins and bachelors, the other called **budu dhare** for the marriage of widows.

After a match has been arranged, the formal betrothal, called **ponnapathera** or **nischaya tambula**, takes place. The bridegroom's relatives and friends proceed in a body on the appointed day to the bride's house, and are there entertained at a grand dinner, to which the bride's relatives and friends are also bidden. Subsequently the **karnavans** (heads) of the two families formally engage to perform the marriage, and plates of betel leaves and areca nuts are exchanged, and the betel and nuts



**CLICK HERE**



partaken of by the two parties.

The actual marriage ceremony is performed at the house of the bride or bridegroom, as may be most convenient. The proceedings commence with the bridegroom seating himself in the marriage pandal, a booth or canopy specially erected for the occasion. He is there shaved by the village barber, and then retires and bathes. This done, both he and the bride are conducted to the pandal by their relations, or sometimes by the village headman. They walk thrice round the seat, and then sit down side by side. The essential and binding part of the ceremony, called **dhare**, then takes place.

The right hand of the bride being placed over the right hand of the bridegroom, a silver vessel (**dhare gindi**) filled with water, with a cocoanut over the mouth and the flower of the areca palm on the cocoanut, is placed on the joined hands. The parents, the managers of the two families, and the village headmen all touch the vessel, which, with the hands of the bridal pair, is





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moved up and down three times.

In certain families the water is poured from the vessel into the united hands of the couple, and this betokens the gift of the bride. This form of gift by pouring water was formerly common, and was not confined to the gift of a bride. It still survives in the marriage ceremonies of various castes, and the name of the Bant ceremony shows that it must once have been universal among them. The bride and bridegroom then receive the congratulations of the guests, who express a hope that the happy couple may become the parents of twelve sons and twelve daughters.

An empty plate, and another containing rice, are next placed before the pair, and their friends sprinkle them with rice from the one, and place a small gift, generally four annas, in the other. The bridegroom then makes a gift to the bride. This is called **sirdachi**, and varies in amount according to the position of the parties. This must be returned to the husband, if his wife



leaves him, or if she is divorced for misconduct. The bride is then taken back in procession to her home. A few days later she is again taken to the bridegroom's house, and must serve her husband with food. He makes another money present to her, and after that the marriage is consummated.

According to another account of the marriage ceremony among some Bants, the barber shaves the bridegroom's face, using cow's milk instead of water, and touches the bride's forehead with razor. The bride and bridegroom bathe, and dress up in new clothes. A plank covered with a newly-washed cloth supplied by a washerman, a tray containing raw rice, a lighted lamp, betel leaves and areca nuts, etc., are placed in the pandal.

A girl carries a tray on which are placed a lighted lamp, a measure full of raw rice, and betel. She is followed by the bridegroom conducted by her brother, and the bride, led by the bridegroom's sister. They enter the **pandal**



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and, after going round the articles contained therein five times, sit down on the plank. An elderly woman, belonging to the family of the caste headman, brings a tray containing rice, and places it in front of the couple, over whom she sprinkles a little of the rice. The assembled men and women then place presents of money on the tray, and sprinkle rice over the couple. The right hand of the bride is held by the headman, and her uncle, and laid in that of the bridegroom. A cocoanut is placed over the mouth of a vessel, which is decorated with mango leaves and flowers of the areca palm. The headman and male relations of the bride place this vessel thrice in the hands of the bridal couple. The vessel is subsequently emptied at the foot of a cocoanut tree.

The foregoing account shows that the Bant marriage is a good deal more than concubinage. It is indeed as formal a marriage as is to be found among any people in the world, and the freedom of divorce which is





allowed cannot deprive it of its essential character. Widows are married with much less formality. The ceremony consists simply of joining the hands of the couple, but, strange to say, a screen is placed between them. All widows are allowed to marry again, but it is, as a rule, only the young women who actually do so. If a widow becomes pregnant, she must marry or suffer loss of caste.

The Bants all burn their dead, except in the case of children under seven, and those who have died of leprosy or of epidemic disease such as cholera or small-pox. The funeral pile must consist at least partly of mango wood. On the ninth, eleventh or thirteenth day, people are fed in large numbers, but the Jains now substitute for this a distribution of cocoanuts on the third, fifth, seventh, or ninth day.

Once a year—generally in October—a ceremony called **agelu** is performed for the propitiation of ancestors. From a detailed account of the Bant death ceremonies, I gather



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that the news of a death is conveyed to the caste people by a Holeyá.

A carpenter, accompanied by musicians, proceeds to cut down a mango tree for the funeral pyre. The body is bathed, and laid out on a plank. Clad in new clothes, it is conveyed with music to the burning-ground. A barber carries thither a pot containing fire. The corpse is set down near the pyre and divested of the new clothes, which are distributed between a barber, washerman, carpenter, a Billava and Holeyá. The pyre is kindled by a Billava, and the mat on which the corpse has been lying is thrown thereon by a son or nephew of the deceased. On the third day the relations go to the burning-ground, and a barber and washerman sprinkle water over the ashes. Some days later, the caste people are invited to attend, and a barber, washerman, and carpenter build up on the spot where the corpse was burnt a lofty structure, made of bamboo and areca palm, in an odd number of tiers, and



supported on an odd number of posts. It is decorated with cloths, fruits, tender cocoanuts, sugarcane, flowers, mango leaves, areca palm flowers, etc., and a fence is set up round it. The sons and other relations of the deceased carry to the burning-ground three balls of cooked rice (**pinda**) dyed with turmeric and tied up in a cloth, some raw rice dyed with turmeric, pieces of green plantain fruit, and pumpkin and a cocoanut. They go thrice round the structure, carrying the various articles in trays on their heads, and deposit them therein. The relations then throw a little of the coloured rice into the structure, and one of the caste men sprinkles water contained in a mango leaf over their hands. After bathing, they return home.

The clothes, jewels, etc., of the deceased are laid on a cloth spread inside the house. A piece of turmeric is suspended from the ceiling by a string, and a tray containing water coloured yellow placed beneath it. Round this the females seat themselves. A cocoanut is broken,





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and a barber sprinkles the water thereof contained in a mango leaf over those assembled. On the following day, various kinds of food are prepared, and placed on leaves, with a piece of new cloth, within a room of the house. The cloth remains there for a year, when it is renewed. The renewal continues until another death occurs in the family.

—					Average.	Maximum.	Minimum.
Brahman	...	...	...	...	80.4	96.4	72
Billava	...	...	...	...	80.1	91.5	71
Bant	...	...	...	...	78	91.2	70.8

The headman among the Bants is generally called **Guttinayya**, meaning person of the **guttu** or site. Every village, or group of villages, possesses a guttu, and the Bant who occupies, or holds in possession the house or site set apart as the guttu is the Guttinayya. When this passes to another by sale or inheritance, the office of headman passes with it. It is said that, in some instances, the headmanship has in this way passed to classes other than Bants, e.g. Brahmans and Jains.

In some villages, the headman is, as among



some other castes, called **Gurikara**, whose appointment is hereditary.

A few supplementary notes may be added on the **Parivara**, **Nad**, and **Masadika Bants**. The Parivaras are confined to the southern taluks of the South Canara district. They may interdine, but may not intermarry with the other section. The rule of inheritance is **makkalakattu** (in the male line).

Brahman priests are engaged for the various ceremonials, so the Parivaras are more Brahmanised than the Nad or Masadika Bants. The Parivaras may resort to the wells used by Brahmans, and they consequently claim superiority over the other sections. Among the Nad Bants, no marriage badge is tied on the neck of the bride.

At a Parivara marriage, after the dhare ceremony, the bridegroom ties a gold bead, called **dhare mani**, on the neck of the bride. The remarriage of widows is not in vogue.



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In connection with the death ceremonies, a car is not, as among the Nad and Masadika sections, set up over the mound (**dhupe**). On the eleventh day, the spreading of a cloth on the mound for offerings of food must be done by **Nekkaras**, who wash clothes for Billavas.

The Nad or Nadava and Masadika Bants follow the aliya santana law of succession, and intermarriage is permitted between the two sections. The names of the balis, which have already been given, are common among the Masadikas, and do not apply to the Nads, among whom different sept names occur, e.g., **Honne**, **Shetti**, **Koudichi**, etc.

Elaborate death ceremonies are only performed if the deceased was old, or a respected member of the community. The corpse is generally cremated in one of the rice-fields belonging to the family. After the funeral, the male members of the family return home, and place a vessel containing water and light in a room. One or two women must remain in this





room, and the light must be kept burning until the **bojja**, or final death ceremonies, are over. The water in the vessel must be renewed twice daily. At the final ceremonies, a feast is given to the castemen, and in some places, the headman insists on the people of the house of mourning giving him a jewel as a pledge that the bojja will be performed on the ninth, eleventh, or thirteenth day.

The headman visits the house on the previous day, and, after examination of the provisions, helps in cutting up vegetables, etc. On the bojja day, copper and silver coins, and small pieces of gold, are buried or sown in the field in which the ceremony is performed. This is called **hanabiththodu**.

The lofty structure, called **gurigi** or **upparige**, is set up over the dhupe or ashes heaped up into a mound, or in the field in which the body was cremated, only in the event of the deceased being a person of importance. In some places, two kinds of structure are used,



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one called gurigi, composed of several tiers, for males, and the other called **delagudu**, consisting of a single tier, for females. Devil-dancers are engaged, and the commonest kola performed by them is the **eru kola**, or man and hobby-horse.

In the room containing the vessel of water, four sticks are planted in the ground, and tied together. Over the sticks a cloth is placed, and the vessel of water placed beneath it. A bit of string is tied to the ceiling, and a piece of turmeric or a gold ring is attached to the end of it, and suspended so as to touch the water in the vessel. This is called **nir neralu** (shadow in water), and seems to be a custom among various Tulu castes. After the bojja ceremony, all those who are under death pollution stand in two rows. A **Madavali** (washerman) touches them with a cloth, and a Kekisi (barber) sprinkles water over them. In this manner, they are freed from pollution.

**Barang Jhodia.**—A sub-division of **Poroja**.



**Bardeshkar** (people of twelve countries).—Some families among **Konkani** Brahmans go by this name.

**Bariki.**—Bariki is the name for village watchmen in Southern Ganjam, whose duty it further is to guide the traveller on the march from place to place. In the Bellary Manual, Barika is given as the name for Canarese **Kabberas**, who are village servants, who keep the village **chavadi** (caste meeting-house) clean, look after the wants of officials halting in the village, and perform various other duties. In the Census Report, 1901, the Barikas are said to be usually **Boyas**. The Barika of Mysore is defined by Mr. L. Rice as \* "a menial among the village servants; a deputy **talari**, who is employed to watch the crops from the growing crop to the granary."

\* Mysore and Coorg Gazetteer.

It is recorded, in the Gazetteer of the Bellary district, that "in the middle of the threshold of





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nearly all the gateways of the ruined fortifications round the Bellary villages will be noticed a roughly cylindrical or conical stone, something like a lingam. This is the **boddu-rayi**, literally the navel stone, and so the middle stone. It was planted there when the fort was built, and is affectionately regarded as being the boundary of the village site.

“Once a year, in May, just before the sowing season begins, a ceremony takes place in connection with it. Reverence is first made to the bullocks of the village, and in the evening they are driven through the gateway past the boddu-rayi with tom-toms, flutes, and all kinds of music. The Barike next does puja (worship) to the stone, and then a string of mango leaves is tied across the gateway above it. The villagers now form sides, one party trying to drive the bullocks through the gate, and the other trying to keep them out.

“The greatest uproar and confusion naturally follow, and, in the midst of the turmoil, some



bullock or other eventually breaks through the guardians of the gate, and gains the village. If that first bullock is a red one, the red grains on the red soils will flourish in the coming season. If he is white, white crops like cotton and white **cholam** will prosper. If he is red-and-white, both kinds will do well.

“When the rains fail, and, in any case, on the first full moon in September, rude human figures drawn on the ground with powdered charcoal may be seen at cross-roads and along big thoroughfares. They represent **Jokumara** the rain-god, and are made by the Barikes—a class of village servants, who are usually of the **Gaurimakkalu** sub-division of the Kabberas.

“The villagers give the artists some small remuneration, and believe that luck comes to those who pass over the figures.”

**Barike.**—A title of Gaudos and other Oriya castes.

**Barrellu** (buffaloes).—An exogamous sept of



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Kapu.

**Basala.**—Recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as Telugu beggars and soothsayers in Vizagapatam. The word is apparently a corruption of Basa-valu, a sage. The Basa-valu pretend to be messengers of Indra, the chief of the Devatas, and prognosticate coming events.

**Basari** (fig tree).—A gotra of **Kurni**.

**Basava Golla.**—A name for certain **Koyis** of the Godavari district, whose grandfathers had a quarrel with some of their neighbours, and separated from them. The name Basava is said to be derived from **bhasha**, a language, as these Koyis speak a different language from the true Gollas.\* In like manner, **Basa Kondhs** are those who speak their proper language, in contradistinction to those who speak Oriya, or Oriya mixed with Kui.

\* Rev. J. Cain. Ind. Ant., V, 1876





**Basavi.**—See Deva-dasi.

**Basiya Korono.**—A sub-division of **Korono**.

**Basruvogaru** (basru, belly).—An exogamous sept of Gauda.

**Baththala** (rice).—An exogamous sept of Kamma.

**Batlu** (cup).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba.

**Bauri.**—There are found in the Madras Presidency nomad gangs of Bauris or Bawariyas, who are described\* as "one of the worst criminal tribes of India. The sphere of their operations extends throughout the length and breadth of the country. They not only commit robberies, burglaries and thefts, but also practice the art of manufacturing and passing counterfeit coin.

They keep with them a small quantity of wheat and sandal seeds in a small tin or brass case, which they call **Devakadana** or God's grain, and a tuft of peacock's feathers, all in a bundle.



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\* M. Paupa Rao Naidu. The Criminal Tribes of India. No. III, Madras, 1907.

They are very superstitious, and do not embark on any enterprise without first ascertaining by omens whether it will be attended with success or not. This they do by taking at random a small quantity of grains out of their Devakadana and counting the number of grains, the omen being considered good or bad according as the number of seeds is odd or even.

For a detailed record of the history of this criminal class, and the methods employed in the performance of criminal acts, I would refer the reader to the accounts given by Mr. Paupa Rao \* and Mr. W. Crooke.\*\*

\* *Op. cit.*

\*\* Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh. Bawariya, 1906.

**Bavaji.** The Bavajis are Bairagi or **Gosayi**



beggars, who travel about the country. They are known by various names, e.g., **Bairagi**, **Sadu**, etc.

**Bavuri.**—The Bavuris, or Bauris, are a low class of Oriya basket-makers, living in Ganjam, and are more familiarly known as Khodalo. They are a polluting class, living in separate quarters, and occupy a position lower than the **Samantiyas**, but higher than the Kondras, Dandasis, and Haddis.

They claim that palanquin (**dhooly** or **duli**) bearing is their traditional occupation, and consequently call themselves Boyi.

"According to one story, " Risley writes, \*  
“they were degraded for attempting to steal food from the banquet of the gods ; another professes to trace them back to a mythical ancestor named **Bahak Rishi** (the bearer of burdens), and tells how, while returning from a marriage procession, they sold the palanquin they had been hired to carry, got drunk on the proceeds, and assaulted their guru (religious





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preceptor), who cursed them for the sacrilege, and condemned them to rank thenceforward among the lowest castes of the community."

\* Tribes and Castes of Bengal, 1891.

The Bavuris are apparently divided into two endogamous sections, viz., **Dulia** and **Khandi**. The former regard themselves as superior to the latter, and prefer to be called Khodalo. Some of these have given up eating beef, call themselves Dasa Khodalos, and claim descent from one **Ballioa Doss**, a famous Bavuri devotee, who is said to have worked wonders, analogous to those of **Nandan** of the Paraiyan community. To this section the caste priests belong.

At Russelkonda, a woman, when asked if she was a Bavuri, replied that the caste is so called by others, but that its real name is **Khodalo**. Others, in reply to a question whether they belonged to the Khandi section, became angry, and said that the Khandis are inferior, because



they eat frogs.

The Bavuris gave the name of two gotras, **saptha bhavunia** and naga, which are said to be exogamous. The former offer food to the gods on seven leaves of the white gourd melon, *Benincasa cerifera* (kokkara), and the latter on jak (*Artocarpus integrifolia* : panasa) leaves. All over the Oriya country there is a general belief that house-names or **bamsams** are foreign to the Oriya castes, and only possessed by the Telugus. But some genuine Oriya castes, e.g-., Haddis, Dandasis and Bhondaris, have exogamous bamsams.

For every group of villages (**muttah**), the Bavuris apparently have a headman called Behara, who is assisted by Naikos or Dolo Beharas, or, in some places, Dondias or Porichas, who hold sway over a smaller number of villages. Each village has its own headman, called **Bhollobhaya** (good brother), to whose notice all irregularities are brought. These are either settled by himself, or referred to the



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Behara and Naiko.

In some villages, in addition to the **Bhollobhaya**, there is a caste servant called **Dangua** or Dogara.

For serious offences, a council-meeting is convened by the Behara, and attended by the Bhollobhayas, Naikos. and a few leading members of the community. The meeting is held in an open plain outside the village. Once in two or three years, a council-meeting, called **mondolo**, is held, at which various matters are discussed, and decided. The expenses of meetings are defrayed by the inhabitants of the villages in which they take place.

Among the most important matters to be decided by tribunals are adultery, eating with lower castes, the re-admission of convicts into the caste, etc. Punishment takes the form of a fine, and trial by ordeal is apparently not resorted to. A man, who is convicted of committing adultery, or eating with a member of a lower caste, is received back into the caste on





payment of the fine.

A woman, who has been proved guilty of such offences, is not so taken back. It is said that, when a member of a higher caste commits adultery with a Bavuri woman, he is sometimes received into the Bavuri caste.

The Behara receives a small fee annually from each village or family, and also a small present of money for each marriage. Girls are married either before or after puberty. A man may marry his maternal uncle's, but not his paternal aunt's daughter. At an adult marriage, the festivities last for four days, whereas, at an infant marriage, they are extended over seven days.

When a young man's parents have selected a girl for him, they consult a Brahman, and, if he decides that the marriage will be auspicious, they proceed to the girl's home, and ask that a day be fixed for the betrothal. On the appointed day the amount of money, which is to be paid by the bridegroom-elect for jewels, etc., is fixed.



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One or two new cloths must be given to the girl's grandmother, and the man's party must announce the number of feasts they intend to give to the castemen. If the family is poor, the feasts are mentioned, but do not actually take place. The marriage ceremony is always celebrated at night.

On the evening of the day prior thereto, the bride and bridegroom's people proceed to the temple of the village goddess (**Takurani**), and, on their way home, go to seven houses of members of their own or some higher caste, and ask them to give them water, which is poured into a small vessel. This vessel is taken home, and hung over the **bedi** (marriage dais). The water is used by the bride and bridegroom on the following morning for bathing.

On the marriage day, the bridegroom proceeds to the bride's village, and is met on the way by her party, and escorted by his brother-in-law to the dais. The Bhollobhaya enquires whether the bride's party have



received everything as arranged, and, when he has been assured on this point, the bride is brought to the dais by her maternal uncle. She carries with her in her hands a little salt and rice ; and, after throwing these over the bridegroom, she sits by his side.

The grandfathers of the contracting couple, or a priest called **Dhiyani**, officiate. Their palms are placed together, and the hands united by a string dyed with turmeric. The union of the hands is called **hasthagonti**, and is the binding portion of the ceremony.

Turmeric water is poured over the hands seven times from a chank or **sankha** shell. Seven married women then throw over the heads of the couple a mixture of *Zizyphus Jujtuba* (*borkolipathro*) leaves, rice smeared with turmeric, and *Cynodon Dactylon* (*dhuba*) culms. This rite is called **bhondaivaro**, and is performed at all auspicious ceremonies.

The fingers of the bride and bridegroom are then linked together, and they are led by the





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wife of the bride's brother seven times round the bedi. The priest then proclaims that the soot can soon be wiped off the cooking-pot, but the connection brought about by the marriage is enduring, and [relationship is secured for seven generations](#).

The pair are taken indoors, and fed. The remaining days of the marriage ceremonies are given up to feasting. The remarriage of widows is permitted. A widow is expected to marry the younger brother of her deceased husband, or, with his permission, may marry whom she likes. When a girl attains maturity, she is seated on a new mat, and *Zizyphus Jujuba* leaves are thrown over her. This ceremony is sometimes repeated daily for six days, during which sweets, etc., are given to the girl, and women who bring presents are fed. On the seventh day, the girl is taken to a tank (pond), and bathed.

The dead are either buried or burnt. The corpse is, at the funeral, borne in the hands, or on a bier, by four men. Soon after the village



boundary has been crossed, the widow of the deceased throws rice over the eyes of the corpse, and also a little fire, after taking it three times round. She usually carries with her a pot and ladle, which she throws away.

If an elderly woman dies, these rites are performed by her daughter-in-law.

At the burial-ground, the corpse is taken seven times round the grave, and, as it is lowered into it, those present say "Oh! trees. Oh! sky. Oh! earth, we are laying him in. It is not our fault."

When the grave has been filled in, the figures of a man and woman are drawn on it, and all throw earth over it, saying "You were living with us ; now you have left us. Do not trouble the people."

On their return home, the mourners sprinkle cow-dung water about the house and over their feet, and toddy is partaken of. On the following day, all the old pots are thrown away, and the



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agnates eat rice cooked with margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves.

Food is offered to the dead person, either at the burial-ground or in the backyard of the house. On the tenth day, the **Dhiyani**, as the priest is called, is sent for, and arrives with his drum (dhiyani). A small hut is erected on a tank bund (embankment), and food cooked seven times, and offered seven times on seven fragments of pots. A new cloth is spread, and on it food, fruits, a chank shell, etc., are placed, and offered to the deceased. The various articles are put into a new pot, and the son, going into the water up to his neck, throws the pot into the air, and breaks it. The celebrants of the rite then return to the house, and stand in a row in front thereof. They are there purified by means of milk smeared over their hands by the Dhiyani. On the twelfth day, food is offered on twelve leaves.

The Bavuris do not worship **Jagannathaswami**, or other of the higher deities,





but reverence their ancestors and the village goddesses or **Takuranis**.

Like other Oriya classes, the Bavuris name their children on the twenty-first day. Opprobrious names are common among them, e.g., **Ogadu** (dirty fellow), **Kangali** (wretched fellow), **Haddia** (Haddi, or sweeper caste).

**Bedar** or **Boya**.—"Throughout the hills," Buchanan writes,\* "northward from **Capaladurga**, are many cultivated spots, in which, during Tippoo's government, were settled many **Baydaru** or hunters, who received twelve pagodas (£ 4 55.) a year, and served as irregular troops whenever required. Being accustomed to pursue tigers and deer in the woods, they were excellent marksmen with their match-locks, and indefatigable in following their prey ; which, in the time of war, was the life and property of every helpless creature that came in their way. During the wars of Hyder and his son, these men were chief instruments in the terrible depredations committed in the lower Carnatic.



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They were also frequently employed with success against the **Poligars** (feudal chiefs), whose followers were of a similar description."

\* Journey through Mysore, Canara and Malabar, 1807.

In the Gazetteer of the Anantapur district it is noted that "the Boyas are the old fighting caste of this part of the country, whose exploits are so often recounted in the history books. The Poligars' forces, and Haidar Ali's famous troops were largely recruited from these people, and they still retain a keen interest in sport and manly exercises."

In his notes on the Boyas, which Mr. N. E. O. Mainwaring has kindly placed at my disposal, he writes as follows. "Although, until quite recently, many a Boya served in the ranks of our Native army, being entered in the records thereof either under his caste title of Naidu, or under the heading of Gentu, \* which was largely used in old day military records, yet this congenial method of earning a livelihood has



now been swept away by a Government order, which directs that in future **no Telegas shall be enlisted into the Indian army.**

\* Gentu or Gentoo is "a corruption of the Portuguese Gentio, gentile or heathen, which they applied to the Hindus in contradistinction to the Moros or Moors, i.e., Mahommedans. It is applied to the Telugu-speaking Hindus specially, and to their language." Yule and Burnell, Hobson-Jobson.

That the Boyas were much prized as fighting men in the stirring times of the eighteenth century is spoken to in the contemporaneous history of Colonel Wilks\* He speaks of the brave armies of the Poligars of Chitteldroog, who belonged to the Beder or Boya race in the year 1755.

\* Historical Sketches of the South of India : Mysore, 1810— 17.

Earlier, in 1750, Hyder Ali, who was then only a Naik in the service of the Mysore Raja, used with great effect his select corps of Beder peons





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at the battle of Ginjee.

Five years after this battle, when Hyder was rising to great eminence, he augmented his Beder peons, and used them as scouts for the purpose of ascertaining the whereabouts of his enemies, and for poisoning with the juice of the milk-hedge (*Euphorbia Tirucalli*) all wells in use by them, or in their line of march.

The historian characterises them as being 'brave and faithful thieves.'

In 1751, the most select army of Morari Row of **Gooty** consisted chiefly of Beder peons, and the accounts of their deeds in the field, as well as their defence of Gooty fort, which only fell after the meanness of device had been resorted to, prove their bravery in times gone by beyond doubt.

There are still a number of old weapons to be found amongst the Boyas, consisting of swords, daggers, spears, and matchlocks. None appear to be purely Boya weapons, but they seem to



have assumed the weapons of either Muhammadans or Hindus, according to which race held sway at the time.

In some districts, there are still Boya Poligars, but, as a rule, they are poor, and unable to maintain any position. Generally, the Boyas live at peace with their neighbours, occasionally only committing a grave dacoity (robbery).\*

\* By law, to constitute dacoity, there must be five or more in the gang committing the crime. Yule and Burnell, op. cit.

"In the Kurnool district, they have a bad name, and many are on the police records as habitual thieves and housebreakers. They seldom stoop to lesser offences. Some are carpenters, others blacksmiths who manufacture all sorts of agricultural implements. Some, again, are engaged as watchmen, and others make excellent snares for fish out of bamboo. But the majority of them are agriculturists, and most of them work on their



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own putta lands. They are now a hard-working, industrious people, who have become thrifty by dint of their industry, and whose former predatory habits are being forgotten. Each village, or group of villages, submits to the authority of a headman, who is generally termed the **Naidu**, less commonly **Dora** as chieftain.

In some parts of Kurnool, the headmen are called **Simhasana Boyas**. The headman presides at all functions, and settles, with the assistance of the elders, any disputes that may arise in the community regarding division of property, adultery, and other matters. The headman has the power to inflict fines, the amount of which is regulated by the status and wealth of the defaulter. But it is always arranged that the penalty shall be sufficient to cover the expense of feeding the **panchayatdars** (members of council), and leave a little over to be divided between the injured party and the headman. In this way, the headman gets paid for his services, and practically fixes his own





remuneration."

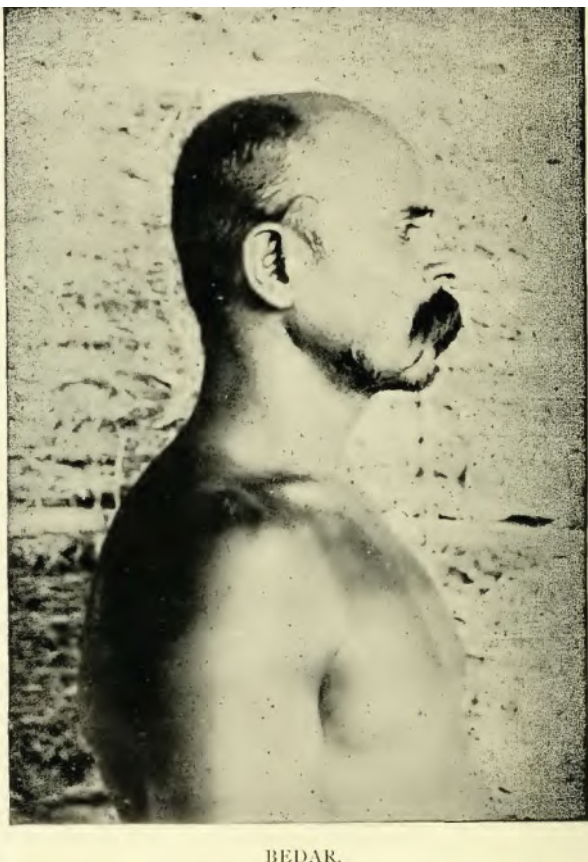
It is stated in the Manual of the Bellary district that "of the various Hindu castes in Bellary, the Boyas (called in Canarese Bedars, Byedas, or Byadas) are far the strongest numerically. Many of the **Poligars** whom Sir Thomas Munro found in virtual possession of the country when it was added to the Company belonged to this caste, and their irregular levies, and also a large proportion of Haidar's formidable force, were of the same breed. Harpanahalli was the seat of one of the most powerful Poligars in the district in the eighteenth century. The founder of the family was a Boya **taliari**, who, on the subversion of the Vijayanagar dynasty, seized on two small districts near Harpanahalli. The Boyas are perhaps the only people in the district who still retain any aptitude for manly sports. They are now for the most part cultivators and herdsmen or are engaged under Government as constables, peons, village watchmen (taliaris), and so forth.



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Their community provides an instructive example of the growth of caste sub-divisions. Both the Telugu-speaking Boyas and the Canarese-speaking Bedars are split into the two main divisions of Uru or village men, and Myasa or grass-land men, and each of these divisions is again sub-divided into a number of exogamous Bedagas.



Four of the best known of these sub-divisions are **Yemmalavaru** or buffalo-men ; **Mandalavaru** or men of the herd ; **Pulavaru** or flowermen, and **Minalavaru** or fish-men. They are

in no way totemistic. Curiously enough, each Bedagu has its own particular god, to which its members pay special reverence. But these Bedagas bear the same names among both the Boyas and the Bedars, and also among both the Uru and Myasa divisions of both Boyas and Bedars. It thus seems clear that, at some distant period, all the Boyas and all the Bedars



must have belonged to one homogeneous caste.

At present, though **Uru Boyas** will marry with Uru Bedars and Myasa Boyas with Myasa Bedars, there is no intermarriage between Urus and Myasas, whether they be Boyas or Bedars. Even if Urus and Myasas dine together, they sit in different rows, each division by themselves. Again, the Urus (whether Boyas or Bedars) will eat chicken and drink alcohol, but the Myasas will not touch a fowl or any form of strong drink, and are so strict in this last matter that they will not even sit on mats made of the leaf of the date-palm, the tree which in Bellary provides all the toddy.

The Urus, moreover, celebrate their marriages with the ordinary ceremonial of the **halu-kamba** or milkpost, and the surge, or bathing of the happy pair ; the bride sits on a flour-grinding stone, and the bridegroom stands on a basket full of cholam (millet), and they call in Brahmans to officiate. But the Myasas have a





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simpler ritual, which omits most of these points, and dispenses with the Brahman.

Other differences are that the Uru women wear **ravikkais** or tight-fitting bodices, while the **Mayasas** tuck them under their waist-string. Both divisions eat beef, and both have a hereditary headman called the ejaman, and hereditary Dasaris who act as their priests."

In the Madras Census Report, 1901, it is stated that the two main divisions of Boyas are called also **Pedda** (big) and **Chinna** (small) respectively, and, according to another account, the caste has four endogamous sections, Pedda, Chinna, Sadaru, and Myasa.

Sadaru is the name of a sub-division of Lingayats, found mainly in the Bellary and Anantapur districts, where they are largely engaged in cultivation. Some Bedars who live amidst those Lingayats call themselves **Sadaru**.

According to the Manual of the North Arcot district, the Boyas are a "Telugu hunting caste,



chiefly found above the ghats. Many of the Poligars of that part of the country used to belong to the caste, and proved themselves so lawless that they were dispossessed. Now they are usually cultivators. They have several divisions, the chief of which are the **Mulki** Boyas and the **Pala** Boyas, who cannot intermarry."

According to the Mysore Census Reports, 1891 and 1901, "the Bedas have two distinct divisions, the Kannada and Telugu, and own some twenty sub-divisions, of which the following are the chief:—Halu, Machi or Myasa, Nayaka, Pallegar, Barika, Kannaiyyanajati, and Kirataka.

“The Machi or Myasa Bedas comprise a distinct sub-division, also called the **Chunchus**. They live mostly in hills, and outside inhabited places in temporary huts. Portions of their community had, it is alleged, been coerced into living in villages, with whose descendants the others have kept up social intercourse. They do not, however, eat fowl or pork, but partake of



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beef; and the Myasa Bedas are the only Hindu class among whom the rite of circumcision is performed,\* on boys of ten or twelve years of age. These customs, so characteristic of the Mussalmans, seem to have been imbibed when the members of this sub-caste were included in the hordes of Haidar Ali.

\* Circumcision is practised by some Kallans of the Tamil country.

“Simultaneously with the circumcision, other rites, such as the panchagavyam, the burning of the tongue with a nim (*Melia Azadirachta*) stick, etc. (customs pre-eminently Brahmanical), are likewise practised prior to the youth being received into communion. Among their other peculiar customs, the exclusion from their ordinary dwellings of women in child-bed and in periodical sickness, may be noted.

“The Myasa Bedas are said to scrupulously avoid liquor or every kind, and eat the flesh of only two kinds of birds, viz., gauja (grey





partridge), and **lavga** (rock-bush quail)."

Of circumcision among the Myasa Bedars it is noted, in the Gazetteer of the Bellary district, that they practise this rite round about Rayadrug and Gudekota. "These Myasas seem quite proud of the custom, and scout with scorn the idea of marrying into any family in which it is not the rule. The rite is performed when a boy is seven or eight. A very small piece of the skin is cut off by a man of the caste, and the boy is then kept for eleven days in a separate hut, and touched by no one. His food is given him on a piece of stone. On the twelfth day he is bathed, given a new cloth, and brought back to the house, and his old cloth, and the stone on which his food was served, are thrown away. His relations in a body then take him to a tangedu (*Cassia auriculata*) bush, to which are offered cocoanuts, flowers, and so forth, and which is worshipped by them and him.

“Girls on first attaining puberty are similarly kept for eleven days in a separate hut, and



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afterwards made to do worship to a tangedu bush. This tree also receives reverence at funerals."

The titles of the Boyas are said to be Naidu or Nayudu, Naik, Dora, **Dorabidda** (children of chieftains), and **Valmiki**. They claim direct lineal descent from Valmiki, the author of the Ramayana. At times of census in Mysore, some Bedars have set themselves up as Valmiki Brahmanas.

The origin of the Myasa Bedas is accounted for in the following story. A certain Bedar woman had two sons, of whom the elder, after taking his food, went to work in the fields. The younger son, coming home, asked his mother to give him food, and she gave him only cholam (millet) and vegetables. While he was partaking thereof, he recognised the smell of meat, and was angry because his mother had given him none, and beat her to death. He then searched the house, and, on opening a pot from which the smell of meat emanated, found that it only



contained the rotting fibre-yielding bark of some plant. Then, cursing his luck, he fled to the forest, where he remained, and became the forefather of the Myasa Bedars.

For the following note on the legendary origin of the Bedars, I am indebted to Mr. Mainwaring.

"Many stories are told of how they came into existence, each story bringing out the name which the particular group may be known by. Some call themselves **Nishadulu**, and claim to be the legitimate descendants of Nishadu. When the great Venudu, who was directly descended from Brahma, ruled over the universe, he was unable to procure a son and heir to the throne. When he died, his death was regarded as an irreparable misfortune. In grief and doubt as to what was to be done, his body was preserved. The seven ruling planets, then sat in solemn conclave, and consulted together as to what they should do. Finally they agreed to create a being from the right thigh of the deceased Venudu, and they accordingly





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fashioned and gave life to Nishudu. But their work was not successful, for Nishudu turned out to be not only deformed in body, but repulsively ugly. It was accordingly agreed, at another meeting of the planets, that he was not a fit person to be placed on the throne. So they set to work again, and created a being from the right shoulder of Venudu. Their second effort was crowned with success. They called their second creation **Chakravati**, and, as he gave general satisfaction, he was placed on the throne. This supersession naturally caused Nishudu, the first born, to be discontented, and he sought a lonely place. There he communed with the gods, begging of them the reason why they had created him, if he was not to rule. The gods explained to him that he could not now be put on the throne, since Chakravati had already been installed, but that he should be a ruler over the forests. In this capacity, Nishudu begot the **Koravas**, **Chenchus**, **Yanadis**, and **Boyas**. The Boyas were his legitimate children, while



the others were all illegitimate.

According to the legend narrated in the **Valmiki Ramayana**, when king **Vishwamitra** quarrelled with the **Rishi Vashista**, the cow **Kamadenu** belonging to the latter, grew angry, and shook herself. From her body an army, which included Nishadulu, **Turka** (Muhammadans), and **Yevannudu** (Yerukalas) at once appeared."

A myth related by the Boyas in explanation of their name **Valmikudu** runs as follows. In former days, a Brahman, who lived as a highwayman, murdering and robbing all the travellers he came across, kept a Boya female, and begot children by her. One day, when he went out to carry on his usual avocation, he met the seven Rishis, who were the incarnations of the seven planets. He ordered them to deliver their property, or risk their lives. The Rishis consented to give him all their property, which was little enough, but warned him that one day he would be called to account for his sinful



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deeds. The Brahman, however, haughtily replied that he had a large family to maintain, and, as they lived on his plunder, they would have to share the punishment that was inflicted upon himself. The Rishis doubted this, and advised him to go and find out from his family if they were willing to suffer an equal punishment with him for his sins. The Brahman went to his house, and confessed his misdeeds to his wife, explaining that it was through them that he had been able to keep the family in luxury. He then told her of his meeting with the Rishis, and asked her if she would share his responsibility. His wife and children emphatically refused to be in any way responsible for his sins, which they declared were entirely his business. Being at his wit's end, he returned to the Rishis, told them how unfortunate he was in his family affairs, and begged advice of them as to what he should do to be absolved from his sins. They told him that he should call upon the god Rama for forgiveness. But, owing to his bad bringing up





and his misspent youth, he was unable to utter the god's name.

“So the Rishis taught him to say it backwards by syllables, thus :—ma ra, ma ra, ma ra, which, by rapid repetition a number of times, gradually grew into Rama. When he was able to call on his god without difficulty, the Brahman sat at the scene of his graver sins, and did penance. White-ants came out of the ground, and gradually enveloped him in a heap. After he had been thus buried alive, he became himself a Rishi, and was known as Valmiki Rishi, valmiki meaning an ant-hill. As he had left children by the Boya woman who lived with him during his prodigal days, the Boyas claim to be descended from these children and call themselves Valmikudu.”

The Bedars, whom I examined at Hospet in the Bellary district, used to go out on hunting expeditions, equipped with guns, deer or hog spears, nets like lawn-tennis nets used in drives for young deer or hares. Several men had



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cicatrices, as the result of encounters with wild boars during hunting expeditions, or when working in the sugar plantations. It is noted in the Bellary Gazetteer that "the only caste which goes in for manly sports seems to be the Boyas, or Bedars, as they are called in Canarese. They organise drives for pig, hunt bears in some parts in a fearless manner, and are regular attendants at the village gymnasium (**garidi** mane), a building without any ventilation often constructed partly underground, in which the ideal exercise consists in using dumbbells and clubs until a profuse perspiration follows. They get up wrestling matches, tie a band of straw round one leg, and challenge all and sundry to remove it, or back themselves to perform feats of strength, such as running up the steep Joladaras hill near Hospet with a bag of grain on their back."

At Hospet wrestling matches are held at a quiet spot outside the town, to witness which a crowd of many hundreds collect. The wrestlers,



who performed before me, had the hair shaved clean behind so that the adversary could not seize them by the back hair, and the moustache was trimmed short for the same reason.

Two young wrestlers, whose measurements I place on record, were splendid specimens of youthful muscularity.

					cm.	cm.
Height	...	...	...	...	163·2	163
Shoulders	...	...	...	...	41·8	42·8
Chest	...	...	...	...	84	82
Upper arm, flexed			...	...	28	29
Thigh	...	...	...	...	47	51

In the Gazetteer of Anantapur it is stated that the Telugu New Year's day is the great occasion for driving pig, and the Boyas are the chief organisers of the beats. All except children, the aged and infirm, join in them, and, since to have good sport is held to be the best of auguries for the coming year, the excitement aroused is almost ludicrous in its intensity. It runs so high that the parties from rival villages have been known to use their weapons upon one another, instead of upon the beasts of the chase.





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In an article entitled "Boyas and bears" \* a European sportsman gives the following graphic description of a bear hunt.

\* Madras Mail, 1902.

"We used to sleep out on the top of one of the hills on a moonlight night. On the top of every hill round, a Boya was watching for the bears to come home at dawn, and frantic signals showed when one had been spotted. We hurried off to the place, to try and cut the bear off from his residence among the boulders, but the country was terribly rough, and the hills were covered with a peculiarly persistent wait-a-bit-thorn. This, however, did not baulk the Boyas. Telling me to wait outside the jumble of rocks, each man took off his turban, wound it round his left forearm, to act as a shield against attacks from the bear, lit a rude torch, grasped his long iron-headed spear, and coolly walked into the inky blackness of the enemy's stronghold, to turn him out for me to shoot at. I used to feel



ashamed of the minor part assigned to me in the entertainment, and asked to be allowed to go inside with them. But this suggestion was always respectfully, but very firmly put aside. One could not see to shoot in such darkness, they explained, and, if one fired, smoke hung so long in the still air of the caves that the bear obtained an unpleasant advantage, and, finally, bullets fired at close quarters into naked rock were apt to splash or re-bound in an uncanny manner. So I had to wait outside until the bear appeared with a crowd of cheering and yelling Boyas after him."

Of a certain cunning bear the same writer records that, unable to shake the Boyas off, "he had at last taken refuge at the bottom of a sort of dark pit, ' four men deep ' as the Boyas put it, under a ledge of rock, where neither spears nor torches could reach him. Not to be beaten, three of the Boyas at length clambered down after him, and unable otherwise to get him to budge from under the mass of rock beneath



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which he had squeezed himself, fired a cheap little nickel-plated revolver one of them had brought twice into his face. The bear then concluded that his refuge was after all an unhealthy spot, rushed out, knocking one of the three men against the rocks as he did so, with a force which badly barked one shoulder, clambered out of the pit, and was thereafter kept straight by the Boyas until he got to the entrance of his residence, where I was waiting for him."

Mr. Mainwaring writes that "the Boyas are adepts at shikar (hunting). They use a bullock to stalk antelope, which they shoot with matchlocks. Some keep a tame buck, which they let loose in the vicinity of a herd of antelope, having previously fastened a net over his horns. As soon as the tame animal approaches the herd, the leading buck will come forward to investigate the intruder.

"The tame buck does not run away, as he probably would if he had been brought up from





infancy to respect the authority of the buck of the herd. A fight naturally ensues, and the exchange of a few butts finds them fastened together by the net. It is then only necessary for the shikaris to rush up, and finish the strife with a knife."

Among other occupations, the Boyas and Bedars collect honey-combs, which, in some places, have to be gathered from crevices in overhanging rocks, which have to be skilfully manipulated from above or below. The Bedar men, whom I saw during the rainy season, wore a black woollen **kambli** (blanket) as a body-cloth, and it was also held over the head as a protection against the driving showers of the south-west monsoon. The same cloth further does duty as a basket for bringing back to the town heavy loads of grass. Some of the men wore a garment with the waist high up in the chest, something like an English rustic's smock frock.

Those who worked in the fields carried steel



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tweezers on a string round the loins, with which to remove babul (*Acacia arabica*) thorns, twigs of which tree are used as a protective hedge for fields under cultivation.

As examples of charms worn by men the following may be cited : —

String tied round right upper arm with metal talisman box attached to it, to drive away devils. String round ankle for the same purpose.

Quarter-anna rolled up in cotton cloth, and worn on upper arm in performance of a vow.

A man, who had dislocated his shoulder when a lad, had been tattooed with a figure of Hanuman (the monkey god) over the deltoid muscle to remove the pain. Necklet of coral and ivory beads worn as a vow to the Goddess **Huligamma**, whose shrine is in Hyderabad.

Necklets of ivory beads and a gold disc with the **Vishnupad** (feet of Vishnu) engraved on it. Purchased from a religious mendicant to bring



good luck.

Myasa Bedar women are said \* to be debarred from wearing toe-rings. Both Uru and Myasa women are tattooed on the face, and on the upper extremities with elaborate designs of cars, scorpions, centipedes, Sita's jade (plaited hair), Hanuman, parrots, etc.

\* Mysore Census Report, 1901.

Men are branded by the priest of a Hanuman shrine on the shoulders with the emblem of the chank shell (*Turbinella rapa*) and chakram (wheel of the law) in the belief that it enables them to go to **Swarga** (heaven). When a Myasa man is branded, he has to purchase a cylindrical basket called **gopala** made by a special Medara woman, a bamboo stick, fan, and winnow.

Female Bedars who are branded become **Basavis** (dedicated prostitutes), and are dedicated to a male deity, and called **Gandu**





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**Basavioru** (male Basavis). They are thus dedicated when there happens to be no male child in a family ; or, if a girl falls ill, a vow is made to the effect that, if she recovers, she shall become a Basavi.

If a son is born to such a woman, he is affiliated with her father's family. Some Bedar women, whose house deities are goddesses instead of gods, are not branded, but a string with white bone beads strung on it, and a gold disc with two feet (Vishnupad) impressed on it, is tied round their neck by a Kuruba woman called **Pattantha Ellamma** (priestess to Uligamma). Bedar girls, whose house deities are females, when they are dedicated as Basavis, have in like manner a necklace, but with black beads, tied round the neck, and are called **Hennu Basavis** (female Basavis).

For the ceremony of dedication to a female deity, the presence of the Madiga goddess **Matangi** is necessary. The Madigas bring a bent iron rod with a cup at one end, and twigs of



*Vitex Negundo* to represent the goddess, to whom goats are sacrificed. The iron rod is set up in front of the doorway, a wick and oil are placed in the cup, and the impromptu lamp is lighted. Various cooked articles of food are offered, and partaken of by the assembled Bedars.

Bedar women sometimes live in concubinage with Muhammadans. And some Bedars, at the time of the Mohurram festival, wear a thread across the chest like Muhammadans, and may not enter their houses till they have washed themselves.

According to the Mysore Census Report, 1901, the chief deity of the Bedars is "**Tirupati Venkataramanaswami** worshipped locally under the name of **Tirumaladevaru**, but offerings and sacrifices are also made to Mariamma. Their guru is known as **Tirumalatatacharya**, who is also a head of the Srivaishnava Brahmans. The Uru Boyas employ Brahmans and Jangams as priests."



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In addition to the deities mentioned, the Bedars worship a variety of minor gods, such as **Kanimiraya**, **Kanakarayan**, **Uligamma**, **Palaya**, **Poleramma**, and others, to whom offerings of fruits and vegetables, and sacrifices of sheep and goats are made. The Dewan of Sandur informs me that, in recent times, some Myasa Bedars have changed their faith, and are now Saivas, showing special reverence to Mahadeva. They were apparently converted by Jangams, but not to the fullest extent. The guru is the head of the Ujjani Lingayat matt (religious institution) in the **Kudligi** taluk of Bellary. They do not wear the lingam. In the Madras Census Report, 1901, the patron deity of the Boyas is said to be **Kanya Devudu**.

Concerning the religion of the Boyas, Mr. Mainwaring writes as follows. "They worship both Siva and Vishnu, and also different gods in different localities. In the North Arcot district, they worship Tirupatiswami. In Kurnool, it is Kanya Devudu. In Cuddapah and Anantapur, it





is **Chendrugadu**, and many, in Anantapur, worship **Akkamma**, who is believed to be the spirit of the seven virgins.

At Uravakonda, in the Anantapur district, on the summit of an enormous rock, is a temple dedicated to Akkamma, in which the seven virgins are represented by seven small golden pots or vessels. Cocoanuts, rice, and dal (*Cajanus indicus*) form the offerings of the Boyas. The women, on the occasion of the **Nagalasauthi** or snake festival, worship the Nagala swami by fasting, and pouring milk into the holes of 'white-ant' hills. By this, a double object is fulfilled. The 'ant' heap is a favourite dwelling of the naga or cobra, and it was the burial-place of Valmiki, so homage is paid to the two at the same time.

Once a year, a festival is celebrated in honour of the deceased ancestors. This generally takes place about the end of November. The Boyas make no use of Brahmans for religious purposes. They are only consulted as regards



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the auspicious hour at which to tie the tali at a wedding. Though the Boya finds little use for the Brahman, there are times when the latter needs the services of the Boya. The Boya cannot be dispensed with, if a Brahman wishes to perform **Vontigadu**, a ceremony by which he hopes to induce favourable auspices under which to celebrate a marriage.

The story has it that Vontigadu was a destitute Boya, who died from starvation. It is possible that Brahmans and Sudras hope in some way to ameliorate the sufferings of the race to which Vontigadu belonged, by feeding sumptuously his modern representative on the occasion of performing the Vontigadu ceremony. On the morning of the day on which the ceremony, for which favourable auspices are required, is performed, a Boya is invited to the house. He is given a present of gingelly (*Sesamum*) oil, wherewith to anoint himself. This done, he returns, carrying in his hand a dagger, on the point of which a lime has been



stuck.

He is directed to the cowshed, and there given a good meal. After finishing the meal, he steals from the shed, and dashes out of the house, uttering a piercing yell, and waving his dagger. He on no account looks behind him. The inmates of the house follow for some distance, throwing water wherever he has trodden. By this means, all possible evil omens for the coming ceremony are done away with."

I gather \* that some Boyas in the Bellary district "enjoy inam (rent free) lands for propitiating the village goddesses by a certain rite called **bhuta bali**. This takes place on the last day of the feast of the village goddess, and is intended to secure the prosperity of the village. The Boya priest gets himself shaved at about midnight, sacrifices a sheep or a buffalo, mixes its blood with rice, and distributes the rice thus prepared in small balls throughout the limits of the village. When he starts out on this business, the whole village bolts its doors, as it





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is not considered auspicious to see him then. He returns early in the morning to the temple of the goddess from which he started, bathes, and receives new cloths from the villagers."

\* Madras Mail, 1905.

At Hospet the Bedars have two buildings called chavadis, built by subscription among members of their community, which they use as a meeting place, and whereat caste councils are held. At Sandur the Uru Bedars submit their disputes to their guru, a **Srivaishnava** Brahman, for settlement.

If a case ends in a verdict of guilty against an accused person, he is fined, and purified by the guru with **thirtham** (holy water). In the absence of the guru, a caste headman, called **Kattaintivadu**, sends a Dasari, who may or may not be a Bedar, who holds office under the guru, to invite the castemen and the **Samaya**, who represents the guru in his absence, to attend a caste meeting. The Samayas are the pujaris at



Hanuman and other shrines, and perform the branding ceremony, called **chakrankitam**.

The Myasa Bedars have no guru, but, instead of him, pujaris belonging to their own caste, who are in charge of the affairs of certain groups of families. Their caste messenger is called Dalavai. The following are examples of exogamous septs among the Boyas, recorded by Mr. Mainwaring :

Mukkara, nose or ear ornament.	Puchakayala, <i>Citrus</i> <i>Colo-</i> <i>cynthis</i> .
Majjiga, butter-milk.	Gandhapodi, sandal powder.
Kukkala, dog.	Pasula, cattle.
Pūla, flowers.	Chinthakāyala, <i>Tamarindus</i> <i>indica</i> .
Pandhi, pig.	Āvula, cow.
Chilakala, paroquet.	Udumala, lizard ( <i>Varanus</i> ).
Hastham, hand.	Pulagam, cooked rice and dhal.
Velkamēti, good rat.	Boggula, charcoal.
Mīsala, whiskers.	Midathala, locust.
Nemili, peacock.	Potta, abdomen.
Pēgula, intestines.	Uṭṭa, swing for holding pots.
Mijam, seed.	Rottala, bread.
Uttarēni, <i>Achyranthes</i> <i>aspera</i> .	Chimpiri, rags.
Panchalingāla, five lingams.	Kōṭala, fort.
Gudisa, hut.	Chāpa, mat.
Tōṭa, garden.	Guntala, pond.
Lanka, island.	Thappata, drum.
Bilpathri, <i>Egle Marmelos</i> .	Bellapu, jaggery.
Kōḍi-kandla, fowl's eyes.	Chīmala, ants.
Gāḍidhe-kandla, donkey's eyes.	Gennēru, <i>Nerium odorum</i> .
Jōti, light.	Pichiga, sparrows.
Nāmāla, the Vaishnavite nāmam.	Uluvala, <i>Dolichos biflorus</i> .
Nāgellu, plough.	Geddam, beard.
Ulligadda, onions.	Eddula, bulls.
Jinkala, gazelle.	Cheruku, sugar-cane.
Dandu, army.	Pasupu, turmeric.
Kattelu, sticks or faggots.	Aggi, fire.
Mēkala, goat.	Mirapakāya, <i>Capsicum frutescens</i> .
Nakka, jackal.	Janjapu, sacred thread.
Chevvula, ear.	Sankati, rāgi or millet pudding.
	Jerripōthu, centipede.
	Guvvala, pigeon.

Many of these septs are common to the Boyas and other classes, as shown by the following list :

Avula, cow—Korava.



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Boggula, charcoal—Devanga.

Cheruku, sugar-cane—Jogi, Odde.

Chevvula, ear—Golla.

Chilakala, paroquet—Kapu, Yanadi.

Chimala, ants—Tsakala.

Chinthakayala, tamarind fruit—Devanga,

Dandu, army—Kapu.

Eddula, bulls—Kapu.

Gandhapodi, sandal powder—a sub-division of Baliya.

Geddama, beard—Padma Sale.

Gudisa, hut—Kapu.

Guvvala, pigeon—Mutracha.

Jinkala, gazelle—Padma Sale.

Kukkala, dog—Orugunta Kapu.

Lanka, island—Kamma,

Mekala, goat—Chenchu, Golla, Kamma, Kapu, Togata, Yanadi.

Midathala, locust—Madiga.





Nakkala, jackal—Dudala, Golla, Mutracha.

Nemili, peacock—Baliya.

Pichiga, sparrow—Devanga.

Pandhi, pig—Asili, Gamalla.

Pasula, cattle—Madiga, Mala.

Puchakaya, colocynth—Komati, Viramushti.

Pula, flowers—Padma Sale, Yerukala.

Tota, garden—Chenchu, Mlla, Mutracha,  
Bonthuk Savara.

Udumala, lizard—Kapu, Tottiyan, Yanadi.

Ulligadda, onions—Korava.

Uiuvalla, horse-gram—Jogi.

Utla, swing for holding pots—Padma Sale.

At Hospet, the preliminaries of a marriage among the Myasa Bedars are arranged by the parents of the parties concerned and the chief men of the keri (street). On the wedding day, the bride and bridegroom sit on a raised platform, and five married men place rice stained with turmeric on the feet, knees,



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shoulders, and head of the bridegroom. This is done three times, and five married women then perform a similar ceremony on the bride. The bridegroom takes up the tali, and, with the sanction of the assembled Bedars, ties it on the bride's neck.

In some places it is handed to a Brahman priest, who ties it instead of the bridegroom. The unanimous consent of those present is necessary before the tali-tying is proceeded with. The marriage ceremony among the Uru Bedars is generally performed at the bride's house, whither the bridegroom and his party proceed on the eve of the wedding. A feast, called **thuppathuta** or ghi (clarified butter) feast, is held, towards which the bridegroom's parents contribute rice, cocoanuts, betel leaves and nuts, and make a present of five bodices (ravike).

At the conclusion of the feast, all assemble beneath the marriage pandal (booth), and betel is distributed in a recognised order of



precedence, commencing with the guru and the god. On the following morning four big pots, smeared with turmeric and chunam (lime) are placed in four corners, so as to have a square space (**irani** square) between them. Nine turns of cotton thread are wound round the pots. Within the square the bridegroom and two young girls seat themselves. Rice is thrown over them, and they are anointed. They and the bride are then washed by five women called bhumathoru.

The bridegroom and one of the girls are carried in procession to the temple, followed by the five women, one of whom carries a brass vessel with five betel leaves and a ball of sacred ashes (**vibuthi**) over its mouth, and another a woman's cloth on a metal dish, while the remaining three women and the bridegroom's parents throw rice. Cocoanuts and betel are offered to Hanuman, and lines are drawn on the face of the bridegroom with the sacred ashes. The party then return to the house. The lower





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half of a grinding mill is placed beneath the pandal, and a Brahman priest invites the contracting couple to stand thereon. He then takes the tali, and ties it on the bride's neck, after it has been touched by the bridegroom. Towards evening the newly married couple sit inside the house, and close to them is placed a big brass vessel containing a mixture of cooked rice, jaggery (crude sugar) and curds, which is brought by the women already referred to. They give a small quantity thereof to the couple, and go away.

Five Bedar men come near the vessel after removing their head-dress, surround the vessel, and place their left hands thereon. With their right hands they shovel the food into their mouths, and bolt it with all possible despatch. This ceremony is called **bhuma idothu**, or special eating, and is in some places performed by both men and women. All those present watch them eating, and, if any one chokes while devouring the food, or falls ill within a few



months, it is believed to indicate that the bride has been guilty of irregular behaviour.

On the following day the contracting couple go through the streets, accompanied by Bedars, the brass vessel and female cloth, and red powder is scattered broadcast. On the morning of the third and two following days, the newly married couple sit on a pestle, and are anointed after rice has been showered over them. The bride's father presents his son-in-law with a turban, a silver ring, and a cloth.

It is said that a man may marry two sisters, provided that he marries the elder before the younger.

The following variant of the marriage ceremonies among the Boyas is given by Mr. Mainwaring. "When a Boya has a son who should be settled in life, he nominally goes in search of a bride for him, though it has probably been known for a long time who the boy is to marry. However, the formality is gone through. The father of the boy, on arrival at the home of



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the future bride, explains to her father the object of his visit. They discuss each other's families, and, if satisfied that a union would be beneficial to both families, the father of the girl asks his visitor to call again, on a day that is agreed to, with some of the village elders. On the appointed day, the father of the lad collects the elders of his village, and proceeds with them to the house of the bride-elect. He carries with him four **moottus** (sixteen seers) of rice, one seer of dhal (*Cajamts indicus*) two seers of ghi (clarified butter), some betel leaves and areca nuts, a seer of fried gram, two lumps of jaggery (molasses), five garlic bulbs, five dried dates, five pieces of turmeric, and a female jacket.

In the evening, the elders of both sides discuss the marriage, and, when it is agreed to, the purchase money has to be at once paid. The cost of a bride is always 101 **madas**, or Rs. 202. Towards this sum, sixteen rupees are counted out, and the total is arrived at by counting areca nuts. The remaining nuts, and





articles which were brought by the party of the bridegroom, are then placed on a brass tray, and presented to the bride-elect, who is requested to take three handfuls of nuts and the same quantity of betel leaves.

On some occasions, the betel leaves are omitted. Betel is then distributed to the assembled persons. The provisions which were brought are next handed over to the parents of the girl, in addition to two rupees. These are to enable her father to provide himself with a sheet, as well as to give a feast to all those who are present at the betrothal. This is done on the following morning, when both parties breakfast together, and separate.

The wedding is usually fixed for a day a fortnight or a month after the betrothal ceremony. The ceremony differs but slightly from that performed by various other castes. A purohit is consulted as to the auspicious hour at which the tali or **bottu** should be tied. This having been settled, the bridegroom goes, on



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the day fixed, to the bride's village, or sometimes the bride goes to the village of the bridegroom.

Supposing the bridegroom to be the visitor, the bride's party carries in procession the provisions which are to form the meal for the bridegroom's party, and this will be served on the first night. As the auspicious hour approaches, the bride's party leave her in the house, and go and fetch the bridegroom, who is brought in procession to the house of the bride.

On arrival, he is made to stand under the pandal which has been erected. A curtain is tied therein from north to south. The bridegroom then stands on the east of the curtain, and faces west. The bride is brought from the house, and placed on the west of the curtain, facing her future husband. The bridegroom then takes up the bottu, which is generally a black thread with a small gold bead upon it. He shows it to the assembled people, and asks permission to fasten it on the bride's neck. The permission is



accorded with acclamations. He then fastens the bottu on the bride's neck, and she, in return, ties a thread from a black cumbly (blanket), on which a piece of turmeric has been threaded, round the right wrist of the bridegroom. After this, the bridegroom takes some seed, and places it in the bride's hand. He then puts some pepper-corns with the seed, and forms his hands into a cup over those of the bride. Her father then pours milk into his hand, and the bridegroom, holding it, swears to be faithful to his wife until death.

After he has taken the oath, he allows the milk to trickle through into the hands of the bride. She receives it, and lets it drop into a vessel placed on the ground between them. This is done three times, and the oath is repeated with each performance. Then the bride goes through the same ceremony, swearing on each occasion to be true to her husband until death. This done, both wipe their hands on some rice, which is placed close at hand on





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brass trays. In each of these trays there must be five seers of rice, five pieces of turmeric, five bulbs of garlic, a lump of jaggery, five areca nuts, and five dried dates.

When their hands are dry, the bridegroom takes as much of the rice as he can in his hands, and pours it over the bride's head. He does this three times, before submitting to a similar operation at the hands of the bride. Then each takes a tray, and upsets the contents over the other. At this stage, the curtain is removed, and, the pair standing side by side, their cloths are knotted together. The knot is called the knot of **Brahma**, and signifies that it is Brahma who has tied them together.

They now walk out of the pandal, and make obeisance to the sun by bowing, and placing their hands together before their breasts in the reverential position of prayer. Returning to the pandal, they go to one corner of it, where five new and gaudily painted earthenware pots filled with water have been previously arranged. Into



one of these pots, one of the females present drops a gold nose ornament, or a man drops a ring. The bride and bridegroom put their right hands into the pot, and search for the article. Whichever first finds it takes it out, and, showing it, declares that he or she has found it.

This farce is repeated three times, and the couple then take their seats on a cumbly in the centre of the pandal, and await the preparation of the great feast which closes the ceremony. For this, two sheep are killed, and the friends and relations who have attended are given as much curry and rice as they can eat.

Next morning, the couple go to the bridegroom's village, or, if the wedding took place at his village, to that of the bride, and stay there three days before returning to the marriage pandal. Near the five water-pots already mentioned, some white-ant earth has been spread at the time of the wedding, and on this some paddy (unhusked rice) and dhal seeds have been scattered on the evening of



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the day on which the wedding commenced.

By the time the couple return, these seeds have sprouted. A procession is formed, and the seedlings, being gathered up by the newly married couple, are carried to the village well, into which they are thrown. This ends the marriage ceremony.

At their weddings, the Boyas indulge in much music. Their dresses are gaudy, and suitable to the occasion. The bridegroom, if he belongs to either of the superior gotras, carries a dagger or sword placed in his cummerbund (loin-band).

A song which is frequently sung at weddings is known as the song of the seven virgins. The presence of a Basavi at a wedding is looked on as a good omen for the bride, since a Basavi can never become a widow."

In some places, a branch of *Ficus religiosa* or *Ficus bengalensis* is planted in front of the house as the marriage milk -post. If it withers, it is thrown away, but, if it takes root, it is reared.





By some Bedars a vessel is filled with milk, and into it a headman throws the nose ornament of a married woman, which is searched for by the bride and bridegroom three times. The milk is then poured into a pit, which is closed up.

In the North Arcot Manual it is stated that the Boya bride, "besides having a golden tali tied to her neck, has an iron ring fastened to her wrist with black string, and the bridegroom has the same. Widows may not remarry or wear black bangles, but they wear silver ones."

"Divorce," Mr. Mainwaring writes, "is permitted. Grounds for divorce would be adultery and ill-treatment. The case would be decided by a panchayat (council). A divorced woman is treated as a widow. The remarriage of widows is not permitted, but there is nothing to prevent a widow keeping house for a man, and begetting children by him. The couple would announce their intention of living together by giving a feast to the caste. If this formality was omitted, they would be regarded as outcastes



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till it was complied with. The offspring of such unions are considered illegitimate, and they are not taken or given in marriage to legitimate children.

Here we come to further social distinctions. Owing to promiscuous unions, the following-classes spring into existence:

1. Swajathee Sumpradayam. Pure Boyas, the offspring of parents who have been properly married in the proper divisions and sub-divisions.

2. Koodakonna Sumpradayam, The offspring of a Boya female, who is separated or divorced from her husband who is still alive, and who cohabits with another Boya.

3. Vithunthu Sumpradayam. The offspring of a Boya widow by a Boya.

4. Arsumpradayam. The offspring of a Boya man or woman, resulting from cohabitation with a member of some other caste.

The **Swajathee Sumpradayam** should only



marry among themselves. **Koodakonna Sumpradayam** and **Vithunthu Sumpradayam** may marry among themselves, or with each other. Both being considered illegitimate, they cannot marry **Swajathe Sumpradayam**, and would not marry Arsumpradayam, as these are not true Boyas, and are nominally outcastes, who must marry among themselves."

On the occasion of a death among the Uru Bedars of Hospet, the corpse is carried on a bier by Uru Bedars to the burial-ground, with a new cloth thrown over, and flowers strewn thereon. The sons of the deceased each place a quarter-anna in the mouth of the corpse, and pour water near the grave. After it has been laid therein, all the agnates throw earth into it, and it is filled in and covered over with a mound, on to the head end of which five quarter-anna pieces are thrown. The eldest son, or a near relation, takes up a pot filled with water, and stands at the head of the grave, facing west. A hole is made in the pot, and, after going thrice round





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the grave, he throws away the pot behind him, and goes home without looking back. This ceremony is called **thelagolu**, and, if a person dies without any heir, the individual who performs it succeeds to such property as there may be.

On the third day the mound is smoothed down, and three stones are placed over the head, abdomen, and legs of the corpse, and whitewashed. A woman brings some luxuries in the way of food, which are mixed up in a winnowing tray divided into three portions, and placed in the front of the stones for crows to partake of. Kites and other animals are driven away, if they attempt to steal the food.

On the ninth day, the divasa (the day) ceremony is performed. At the spot where the deceased died is placed a decorated brass vessel representing the soul of the departed, with five betel leaves and a ball of sacred ashes over its mouth. Close to it a lamp is placed, and a sheep is killed. Two or three days afterwards,



rice and vegetables are cooked.

Those who have been branded carry their gods, represented by the cylindrical bamboo basket and stick already referred to, to a stream, wash them therein, and do worship. On their return home, the food is offered to their gods, and served first to the Dasari, and then to the others, who must not eat till they have received permission from the Dasari.

When a Myasa Bedar, who has been branded, dies his basket and stick are thrown into the grave with the corpse.

In the Mysore Census Report, 1891, the Mysore Bedars are said to cremate the dead, and on the following day to scatter the ashes on five **tangedu** (*Cassia auriculata*) trees.

It is noted by Buchanan \* that the spirits of **Baydaru** men who die without having married become **Virika** (heroes), and to their memory have small temples and images erected, where offerings of cloth, rice, and the like, are made to



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their names. If this be neglected, they appear in dreams, and threaten those who are forgetful of their duty.

\* Op. cit.

These temples consist of a heap or cairn of stones, in which the roof of a small cavity is supported by two or three flags ; and the image is a rude shapeless stone, which is occasionally oiled, as in this country all other images are."

**Bedar.**—See Vedan.

**Begara.**—Begara or Byagara is said to be a synonym applied by Canarese Lingayats to Holeyas.

**Behara.**—Recorded, at times of census, as a title of various Oriya castes, e.g., Alia, Aruva, Dhobi, Gaudo, Jaggali, Kevuto, Kurumo, Ronguni, and Sondi. In some cases, e.g., among the Rongunis, the title is practically an exogamous sept. The headman of many Oriya castes is called Behara.





**Bejjo.**—A sub-division of Bhondari, and title of Kevuto.

**Belata** (*Feronia elephantum* : wood-apple).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba.

**Bellapu** (jaggery : palm-sugar).—An exogamous sept of Boya.

**Bellara.**—"The Bellaras, or Belleras," Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,\* "are a somewhat higher caste of basket and mat-makers than the *Parava* umbrella-makers and devil-dancers. They speak a dialect of Canarese (see South Canara Manual, Vol. II). They follow the *aliya santana* law (inheritance in the female line), but divorce is not so easy as amongst most adherents of that rule of inheritance, and divorced women, it is said, may not marry again. Widows, however, may remarry. The dead are either burned or buried, and a feast called Yede is given annually in the name of deceased ancestors. The use of alcohol and flesh, except beef, is permitted. They make both grass and bamboo mats."



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\* Manual of the South Canara district.

**Bellathannaya** (jaggery : crude sugar).—An exogamous sept of Bant.

**Belle** (white).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba. The equivalent bile occurs as a gotra of Kurni.

**Belli**.—Belli or Velli, meaning silver, has been recorded as an exogamous sept of Badaga, Korava, Kuruba, Madiga, Okkiliyan, Toreya, and Vakkaliga. The Belli Toreyas may not wear silver toe-rings.

Vellikkai, or silver-handed, has been returned as a sub-division of the Konga Vellalas.

**Belu** (*Feronia elephantum*).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba.

**Benayito**.—A sub-division of Odiya.

**Bende** (*Hibiscus esculentus*).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba. The mucilaginous fruit (*bendekai* or *bandicoy*) of this plant is a



favourite vegetable of both Natives and Europeans. The nick-name Bendekai is sometimes given, in reference to the sticky nature of the fruit, to those who try to smooth matters over between contending parties.

**Bengri** (frog).—A sept of Domb.

**Benia**.—A small caste of Oriya cultivators and palanquin-bearers in Ganjam. It is on record\* that in Ganjam honey and wax are collected by the **Konds** and Benias, who are expert climbers of precipitous rocks and lofty trees. The name is said to be derived from bena, grass, as the occupation of the caste was formerly to remove grass, and clear land for cultivation.

\* Agricultural Ledger Series, Calcutta, No. 7, 1904.

**Benise** (flint stone).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba.

**Benne** (butter).—A gotra of Kurni.

**Bepari**.—Bepari is, in the Madras Census





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Report, described as "a caste allied to the Lambadis. Its members worship a female deity called **Banjara**, speak the **Bepari** or **Lambadi** language, and claim to be Kshatriyas."

Bhonjo, the title of the Rajah of **Gumsur**, was returned as a sub-caste. The Rev. G. Gloyer\* correctly makes the name Boipari synonymous with Brinjari, and his illustration of a Boipari family represents typical Lambadis or Brinjaris. Bepari and Boipari are forms of **Vyapari** or Vepari, meaning a trader.

\* Jeypore. Breklum, 1901.

The Beparis are traders and carriers between the hills and plains in the Vizagapatam Agency tracts. Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao informs me that "they regard themselves as immune from the attacks of tigers, if they take certain precautions.

Most of them have to pass through places infested with these beasts, and their favourite method of keeping them off is as follows. As



soon as they encamp at a place, they level a square bit of ground, and light fires in the middle of it, round which they pass the night. It is their firm belief that the tiger will not enter the square, from fear lest it should become blind, and eventually be shot.

I was once travelling towards **Malkangiri** from Jeypore, when I fell in with a party of these people encamped in the manner described. At that time, several villages about Malkangiri were being ravaged by a notorious man-eater (tiger)."

**Beralakoduva** (finger-giving).—A section of the **Vakkaligas**, among whom the custom of sacrificing some of the fingers used to prevail. (See Morasu.)

**Beri Chetti.**—The Beri Chettis, or principal merchants, like other Chettis and Komatis, claim to Vaisyas, "but they will not admit that the Komatis are on a par with them, and declare that they alone represent the true Vaisya stock."\*



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\* Manual of the North Arcot district.

With regard to their origin, the **Kanyakapurana** states that a certain king wanted to marry a beautiful maiden of the Komati caste. When the Komatis declined to agree to the match, the king began to persecute them, and those Komatis who left the country out of fear were called **Beri** or **Bediri** (fear) **Chettis**.

The story is in fact, similar to that told by the **Nattukottai Chettis**, and the legend, no doubt, refers to persecution of some king, whose extortion went beyond the limits of custom. Another derivation of the word Beri is from **perumai**, greatness or splendour.

The name Beri, as applied to a sub-division of the Komatis, is said to be a corruption of bedari, and to denote those who fled through fear, and did not enter the fire-pits with the caste goddess Kanyakamma.

The legend of the Beri Chettis, as given by





Mr. H. A. Stuart,\* states that "**Kaveripuram** near Kumbakonam was formerly the town in which the caste principally resided. The king of the country attempted to obtain a Beri Chetti maiden in marriage, but was refused, and he therefore persecuted them, and drove them out of his dominions, forbidding- interchange of meals between them and any other caste whatever—a prohibition which is still in force."

\* Manual of the North Arcot district.

The Beri Chettis have a number of endogamous divisions, named after geographical areas, towns, etc., such as **Tirutaniyar**, **Acharapakaththar**, **Telungu**, **Pakkam**, **Musalpakam**. Among these there is an order of social precedence, some of the divisions inter-dining, others not.

The Beri Chettis are, like the Kammalans (artisan class), a leading caste of the left-hand section, and the following story is narrated. While the Beris were living at Kaveripuram in a



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thousand houses, each house bearing a distinct gotra (house name,) a king, who took wives from among all castes, wanted the Beris to give him one of their maidens. Though unwilling, they promised to do so, but made up their minds to get over the difficulty by a ruse. On the day fixed for the marriage, all the Beri families left the place, after a male black dog had been tied to the milk-post of the marriage pandal (booth). When he learnt what had occurred, the king was very angry, and forbade all castes to take water from the Beris. And this led to their joining the left-hand section.

The Beri Chettis resort to the panchayat system of administration of affairs affecting the caste, and the headman, called **Peridanakkaran**, is assisted by a barber of the left-hand section. They are in favour of infant marriages, though adult marriage is not prohibited. They are not allowed to tie plantain trees to the posts of the wedding pandal, with the trees touching the ground. If this is done,



the **Paraiyans**, who belong to the right-hand section, cut them down. This custom is still observed in some out-of-the way villages.

**Upanayanam**, or investiture with the sacred thread, is either performed long before marriage, or by some along with the marriage rite. A man or boy, after investiture, always wears the thread.

Most of the Beri Chettis are meat-eaters, but some profess to be vegetarians. It is said that there is much dispute between the Beri Chettis and the Komatis regarding their relative positions, and each caste **delights to tell stories to the detriment of the other.**

In general estimation, however, the Beris are deemed a little inferior to the Komatis." \*

\* Madras Census Report, 1891.

The claim of the Beri Chettis to be Vaisyas is based on the following legend, as given by Mr. Stuart,\* "In the time of the Cholas, they erected





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a water-pandal, and Komatis claimed the right to use it, which was at once denied. The king attempted to solve the question by reference to inscriptions in the **Kamakshiamma** temple at Conjeeveram, but without success. He then proposed that the rivals should submit to the ordeal of carrying water in an unbaked pot. This was agreed to, and the Beri Chettis were alone successful. The penalty for failure was a fine of Rs. 12,000, which the Komatis could not pay, and they were therefore obliged to enslave themselves to a Beri Chetti woman, who paid the fine. Their descendants are still marked men, who depend upon Beri Chettis for their subsistence. **The great body of the Komatis in the country were not parties to the agreement, and they do not now admit that their inferiority has ever been proved."**

\* *Op. cit.*

According to another version of the legend, during the reign of the Cholas, a water-pandal



was erected by the Beris, and the Komatis claimed the right to use it. This was refused on the ground that they were not Vaisyas. The question at issue was referred to the king, who promised to enquire into it, but did not do so. A **Viramushti** (caste beggar of the Beri Chettis and Komatis) killed the king's horse and elephant. When questioned as to his reason for so doing, he explained that it was to call the king's attention to the dispute, and restored the animals to life. The king then referred both parties to Conjeeveram, where a **sasanam** (copper-plate grant) was believed to exist.

To procure this document, the decapitation of twelve human beings was necessary, and the Viramushti sacrificed his twelve children. According to the document, the Beris were Vaisyas, and the Komatis were ordered to be beheaded. But some Beris interceded on their behalf, and they were pardoned on condition that they would pay a sum of money. To secure the necessary money, they became slaves to a



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rich Beri woman. Ever since this incident, the Komatis have been the children of the Beris, and their descendants are called **Pillaipuntha Komati**, or Komati who became a son.

For the services which he rendered, the Viramushti is said to have been presented with a sasanam, and he is treated as a son by the caste men, among whom he has some influence. For example, the Beri Chettis may not plant in their back-yards *Moringa pterygosperma*, *Dolichos Lablab*, or a red variety of **Amarantus**. If the Viramushti found the first of these planted, he would destroy it, and demand a fine of three fanams.

For Dolichos the fine is six fanams, and for Amarantus one fanam. The rearing of pigs, goats, and fowls by the Beri Chettis is forbidden under penalty of a fine. If a Beri Chetti woman carries a water-pot on her head, the Viramushti will throw it down, and demand a fine of twelve fanams.

The women are not allowed to carry on sales





at a public fair, under penalty of excommunication. The Beri Chettis and Komatis should not do business together.

The Kammalans and Chettis are regarded as friends, and there is a Tamil proverb "*Settiyum Kammalanum onnu*," i.e., the Chetti and Kammalan are one. In this connection the following legend is quoted.

“In the town of Kanda, anciently the **Camalas** (artificers of five sorts) lived closely united together, and were employed by all ranks of men, as there were no artificers besides them. They feared and respected no king, which offended certain kings, who combined against them, taking with them all kinds of arms. But, as the fort (**Kanda Kottai**, or magnetic fort), in which the Camalar lived, was entirely constructed of loadstone, this attracted, and drew the weapons away from the hands of the assailants. The kings then promised a great reward to anyone who should burn down the fort. No one dared to do this. At length the



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courtesans of a temple engaged to effect it, and took the pledge of betel and areca, engaging thereby to do so. The kings, greatly rejoicing, built a fort opposite, filled with such kind of courtesans, who, by their singing, attracted the people from the fort, and led to intercourse.

One of these at length succeeded in extracting from a young man the secret, that, if the fort was surrounded with **varacu** straw, set on fire, it might be destroyed. The king accordingly had this done, and, in the burning down of the fort, many of the Camalar lost their lives.

Some took to ships belonging to them, and escaped by sea. In consequence, there were no artificers in that country. Those taken in the act of endeavouring to escape were beheaded. One woman of the tribe, being pregnant, took refuge in the house of a Chetti, and escaped, passing for his daughter. From a want of artificers, who made implements for weavers, husbandmen, and the like, manufactures and



agriculture ceased, and great discontent arose in the country.

The king, being of clever wit, resorted to a device to discover if any of the tribe remained, to remedy the evil complained of. This was to send a piece of coral, having a fine tortuous aperture running through it, and a piece of thread, to all parts of the country, with promise of great reward to any one who should succeed in passing the thread through the coral. None could accomplish it. At length the child that had been born in the Chetty's house undertook to do it ; and, to effect it, he placed the coral over the mouth of an ant-hole, and having steeped the thread in sugar, placed it at some little distance. The ants took the thread, and drew it through the coral. The king, seeing the difficulty overcome, gave great presents, and sent much work to be done, which that child, under the council and guidance of its mother, performed.

The king sent for the Chetty, and demanded an account of this young man, which the Chetty





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detailed. The king had him plentifully supplied with the means especially of making ploughshares, and, having married him to the daughter of a Chetty, gave him grants of land for his maintenance. He had five sons, who followed the five different branches of work of the Camalar tribe. The king gave them the title of **Panchalar**.

Down to the present day there is an intimate relation between these five branches, and they intermarry with each other ; while, as descendants of the Chetty tribe, they wear the punul, or caste-thread of that tribe." \*

\* Taylor. Catalogue Raisonne of Oriental Manuscripts.

The **Acharapakam** Chettis are known as Malighe Chettis, and are connected with the Chettis of this legend. Even now, in the city of Madras, when the Beri Chettis assemble for the transaction of caste business, the notice summoning the meeting excludes the Malighe Chettis, who cannot, like other Beri Chettis, vote



at elections, meetings, etc., of the Kandasami temple.

Some Beri Chettis, Mr. Stuart writes, "worship Siva, and some Vishnu, and a few are Lingayats, who do not marry into families with a different worship. They bury, while the others burn their dead. All the divisions wear the sacred thread, and do not tolerate widow remarriage. Unlike Komatis, their daughters are sometimes married after puberty."

**Berike.**—The children of a Boya widow by a man of her own caste, with whom she lives, are said \* to drift into a distinct section called Berike.

\* Madras Census Report, 1901.

**Bestha.**—The Besthas are summed up, in the Madras Census Report, 1891, as "a Telugu caste, the hereditary occupation of which is hunting and fishing, but they have largely taken to agriculture, and the professions of bearers



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and cooks."

In the Census Report, 1901, it is stated that "the fisherman caste in the Deccan districts are called **Besthas** and **Kabberas**, while those in some parts of the Coimbatore and Salem districts style themselves Toreyar, Siviya, and Parivarattar. These three last speak Canarese like the Kabberas, and seem to be the same as Besthas or Kabberas.

Kabbera and Toreya have, however, been treated as distinct castes. There are two endogamous sub-divisions in the Bestha caste, namely the **Telaga** and the **Parigirti**. Some say that the Kabbili or **Kabberavandlu** are a third.

The Parigirti section trace their descent from **Sutudu**, the famous expounder of the Mahabharata.

Besthas employ Brahmans and Satanis (or Jangams, if Saivites) for their domestic ceremonies, and imitate the Brahman customs, prohibiting widow remarriage, and worshipping





Siva and Vishnu as well as the village deities.

The Maddi sub-caste is said to be called so, because they dye cotton with the bark of the maddi tree (*Morinda citrifolia*)! It is suggested, in the Gazetteer of the Bellary district, that the Besthas are really a sub-division of the **Gangimakkalu Kabberas**, who were originally palanquin-bearers, but, now that these vehicles have gone out of fashion, are employed in divers other ways.

It may be noted that the Siviylars of Coimbatore say that they are Besthas who emigrated from Mysore in the troublous times of the Muhammadan usurpation. The name Siviylar, they say, was given to them by the Tamils, as, being strong and poor, they were palanquin-bearers to officers on circuit and others in the pre-railway days. Their main occupations at the present day are tank and river fishing.

In the Manual of the North Arcot district, it is noted that many Besthas “trade, and are in a



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flourishing condition, being most numerous above the ghats. The name Bestha appears to have no meaning, but they call themselves **Sutakulam**, and say they are descendants of the rishi **Suta Mahamuni**. The term Suta also applies to the offspring of a Kshatriya by a Brahman, but it seems more probable that the Besthas gained the name from their superiority in the culinary art, **suta** also meaning cook.

They are divided into **Telugu Besthas** and **Parigirti Besthas**, the difference between them being chiefly one of religious observance, the former being in the habit of getting themselves branded on the shoulders with the Vaishnavite emblems—**chank** and **chakram** — and the latter never undergoing this ceremony. It is a rule with them to employ Dasaris as the messengers of a death, and Tsakalas, as those of a birth, or of the fact that a girl has reached womanhood.

Their chief object of worship is Hanuman, the monkey god, a picture or figure of whom they always have in their houses for domestic



worship."

In connection with the names **Parigirti** or **Pakirithi** which have been recorded as divisions of the Besthas, it may be observed that, in some parts of the Telugu country, the term Pakirithi is used as a substitute for Vaishnava. This word has become converted into Parigirti or Parikithi, denoting that the Besthas are Vaishnavites, as opposed to Saivites.

Some Besthas, when questioned as to the origin of their caste, said that they had no **purandam** to help them. The word used by them is a corruption of **puranam**.

The Besthas are summed up, in the Mysore Census Report, 1901, as "fishermen, boatmen, and palanquin-bearers, who are known by different names according to the localities they live in. In the eastern districts they are called Bestha, in the southern Toraya, **Ambiga** and **Parivara** (boatmen), while in the western parts their names are **Kabyara** and **Gangemakkalu**.





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“The Telugu-speaking population call themselves Boyis. Their chief occupations are fishing, palanquin-bearing, and lime-burning. Some of them are employed by Government as peons (orderlies), etc., while a large number are engaged in agricultural pursuits. The Boyis obey a headman called the **Pedda** (big) Boyi.

“The Toraya does not intermarry either with the Kabyara or the Boyi, whom he resembles in every way. The Kabyara or Karnatic Besthas proper never carry the palanquin, but live by either farming or lime-burning. They have a headman known as the **Yajaman**.”

I have often seen Besthas in Mysore fishing on tanks from rafts, with floats made of cane or cork-wood supporting their fish-baskets. The Besthas use small cast-nets, and it is thought by them that the employment of drag-nets worked by several men would bring bad luck to them. When a new net is used for the first time, the first fish which is caught is cut, and the net smeared with its blood. One of the meshes of



the net is burnt, after incense has been thrown into the fire.

If a snake becomes entangled in a net when it is first used, it is rejected, and burnt or otherwise disposed of. The tribal deity of the Telugu Besthas is Kamamma, and, when this goddess is worshipped, **Mala Pambalas** are engaged to recite the legendary story relating to her. They never offer the flesh of animals or liquor to the goddess. Like other Telugu castes, the Besthas have *intiperulu* or exogamous septs and gotras.

In connection with some of the latter, certain prohibitions are observed. For example, the jasmine plant (**malle**) may not be touched by members of the malle gotra, and the **ippa** tree (*Bassia latifolia*) may not be touched or used by members of the Ippala gotra.

Writing at the beginning of the last century, Buchanan\* informs us that "everywhere in Karnata the palanquin-bearers are of **Telinga** descent. In the language of Karnata they are



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called Teliga Besthas, but in their own dialect they are called **Bai**. Their proper occupations, beside that of carrying the palanquin, are fishing, and distillation of rum. Wealthy men among them become farmers, but none of the caste hire themselves out as farm servants. Their hereditary chiefs are called **Pedde Bui**, which, among the Europeans of Madras, is bestowed on the headman of every gentleman's set."

\* Journey from Madras through Mysore, Canara and Malabar,

In a note on the Bestha Boyis, or fishermen bearers of Masulipatam in the days of the East India Company, Mr. H. G. Prendergast writes\* that they were "found to be peculiarly trustworthy servants. When their English masters went on promotion to Madras, they were accompanied by their trusty Boyis, and, from that day to this, Bestha Boyis have been employed as attendants in public and





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mercantile offices in Madras, and have continued to maintain their good reputation."

\* Ind. Ant. XVIII, 1889.

Of the use of the word Boy (a corruption of Boyi) for palanquin-bearer, numerous examples are quoted by Yule and Burnell\*.

\* Hobson-Jobson.

Thus Carraccioli, in his **life of Lord Clive**, records that, in 1785, the Boys with Colonel Lawrence's palankeen, having struggled a little out of the time of march, were picked up by the Marattas. Writing in 1563, Barras states\* that "there are men who carry the umbrella so dexterously to ward off the sun that, although their master trots on his horse, the sun docs not touch any part of his body and such men are called Boi."

\* Decadas de Asia.



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The insigne of the Besthas, as recorded at Conjeeveram, is a net.\*

\* J. S. F. Mackenzie, Ind. Ant. IV, 1875.

**Besya** (a prostitute).—Recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as a sub-caste of **Oriya Gunis**. It is a form of the word Vesya.

**Betta** (hill).—A sub-division of Kurumba.

**Bevina**.—Bevina or Beva (nim or margosa : *Melia Azadirachta*) has been recorded as an exogamous sept of Kuruba, and a sub-division of Kadu Kurumba. The nim tree is held sacred by Hindus, and takes an important part in many of the ceremonials connected with the small-pox goddess and other village deities.

**Bhag** (tiger).—A sept of numerous classes in Vizagapatam, e.g., Bhumia, Bottada, Domb, Gadaba, Mattiya, Omanaito, Pentiya, and Rona. The equivalent Bhago occurs among some classes in Ganjam.

**Bhagavatulu**.—Recorded as play-actors in



the Telugu country. Their name is derived from the fact that they perform stories and episodes from the Bhagavatam, one of the Puranas.

**Bhakta.**—See Bagata.

**Bhandari.**—See Kelasi.

**Bhande.**---Recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as "a class of potters in the Ganjam Maliahs, a sub-division of Kumbharo. The name is derived from the Sanskrit bhanda, a pot."

**Bharadwaja.**—A Brahmanical gotra of Bhatrazus. **Bharadwaja** was a rishi, the son of **Brihaspati**, and preceptor of the Pandavas.

**Bhatia.** — Nearly four hundred members of this caste were returned at the Madras Census, 1901. It is recorded in the Bombay Gazetteer, that "the Bhatias claim to be Bhati Rajputs of the Yadav stock. As a class they are keen, vigorous, enterprising, thrifty, subtle and unscrupulous. Some of the richest men in Bombay started life without a penny. A large





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number of Bhatias are merchant traders and brokers, and within the last fifty years they have become a very wealthy and important class."

Like the Nattukottai Chettis of Southern India, the Bhatias undertake sea voyages to distant countries, and they are to be found eastward as far as China.

**Bhatta.**— A sub-division of Gaudo.

**Bhatkali.**—A class of Muhammadans on the west coast, who are said to have originally settled at Bhatkal in North Canara.

**Bhatrazu.**—The Bhats, Bhatrazus, or Bhatrajus are described, in the Mysore Census Reports, 1891 and 1901, as musicians and ballad-reciters, who "speak Telugu, and are supposed to have come from the Northern Circars. They were originally attached to the courts of the Hindu princes as bards or professional, reciting ballads in poetry in glorification of the wondrous deeds of local princes and heroes.



Hyder Ali, although not a Hindu, delighted to be constantly preceded by them, and they are still an appendage to the state of Hindu and Mussalman Chiefs. They have a wonderful faculty in speaking *improvisatore*, on any subject proposed to them, a declamation in measures, which may be considered as a sort of medium between blank verse and modulated verse. But their profession is that of chanting the exploits of former days in front of the troops while marshalling them for battle, and inciting them to emulate the glory of their ancestors. Now many of them are mendicants."

In the Madras Census Report, 1871, the Bhat Rajahs are said to "wear the **pavitra** or sacred thread. They are the bards and minstrels, who sing the praises of the Kshatriya race, or indeed of great men in general, and especially of those who liberally reward the singers. They are a wandering class, gaining a living by attaching themselves to the establishments of great men, or in chanting the folklore of the people. They



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are mostly Vishnu worshippers, and in only one district is it reported that they worship village deities."

In the Madras Census Report, 1891, the Bhatrazus are summed up as being "a class of professional bards, spread all over the Telugu districts. They are the representatives of the Bhat caste of other parts of India. They are called **Razus**, because they are supposed to be the offspring of a Kshatriya female by a Vaisya male. They are well-versed in folklore, and in the family histories and legends of the ancient Rajahs. Under the old Hindu Rajahs the Bhatrazus were employed as bards, eulogists, and reciters of family genealogy and tradition. Most of them are now cultivators, and only a few are ballad-reciters.

"They will eat with the Kapus and Velamas. Their ceremonies of birth, death and marriage are more or less the same as those of the Kapus. Razu is the general name of the caste."

The Bhatrazus, Mr. W. Francis writes,\* "are





also called Bhats or Magadas. They have two endogamous sub-divisions, called **Vandi**, Raja or Telaganya, and Magada, Kani or Agraharekala. [Some Bhatrazus maintain that Vandi and Magada were individuals who officiated as heralds at the marriage of Siva.]

\* Madras Census Report, 1901.

“Each of these is again split up into several exogamous septs or gotras, among which are Atreya, Bharadwaja, Gautama, Kasyapa and Kaundinya. All of these are Brahmanical gotras, which goes to confirm the story in Manu that the caste is the offspring of a Vaisya father and a Kshatriya mother. Bhatrazus nevertheless do not all wear the sacred thread now-a-days, or recite the **gayatri**\*.

\* Sanskrit hymn repeated a number of times during daily ablutions.

“They employ Brahman priests for their marriages, but Jangams and Satanis for



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funerals, and in all these ceremonies they follow the lower or Puranic instead of the higher Vedic ritual. Widow marriage is strictly forbidden, but yet they eat fish, mutton and pork, though not beef.

“These contradictions are, however, common among Oriya castes, and the tradition is that the Bhatrazus were a northern caste which was first invited south by **King Pratapa Rudra** of the Kshatriya dynasty of Warangal ( 1295-1323 A.D. ). After the downfall of that kingdom they seem to have become court bards and panegyrists under the Reddi and Velama feudal chiefs, who had by that time carved out for themselves small independent principalities in the Telugu country. As a class they were fairly educated in the Telugu literature, and even produced poets such as **Ramaraja Bhushana**, the author of the well-known **Vasu-Charitram**.

“Their usual, title is Bhat, sometimes with the affix Razu or **Murti**.”

Of the Bhatrazus in the North Arcot district,



Mr. H. A. Stuart states\* that "they now live by cultivation, and by singing the fabulous traditions current regarding the different Sudra castes at their marriages and other ceremonies, having probably invented most of them. They profess to be Kshatriyas. But it is known that several are Musalmans or members of other castes, who, possessing an aptitude for extempore versification, were taken by Rajahs to sing their praises, and so called themselves Bhatturazus. They resemble the Razus in their customs, but are said to bury their dead."

\* Manual of the North Arcot district.

In the Gazetteer of Anantapur, the Bhatrazus are described as touring round the villages, making extempore verses in praise of the principal householders, and being rewarded by gifts of old clothes, grain, and money.

It is stated in the Kurnool Manual that "the high-caste people (Kammas) are bound to pay the Batrajulu certain fees on marriage





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occasions. Some of the Batrajas have **shotriems** and **inams**."

Shotriem is land given as a gift for proficiency in the Vedas or learning, and **inam** is land given free of rent.

In connection with the special attachment of the Bhatrazus to the Velama, Kamma, and Kapu castes, the following story is narrated. Once upon a time there was a man named **Pillala Marri Bethala Reddi**, who had three sons, of whom two took to cultivation. The third son adopted a military life, and had seventy-four sons, all of whom became commanders. On one occasion, during the reign of Pratapa Rudra, when they were staying at the fort of Warangal, they quarrelled among themselves, and became very rebellious. On learning this, the king summoned them to his court. He issued orders that a sword should be tied across the gate. The commanders were reluctant to go under a sword, as it would be a sign of humiliation. Some of them ran against



the sword, and killed themselves. A Bhatrazu, who witnessed this, promised to help the remaining commanders to gain entrance without passing under the sword. He went to the king, and said that a Brahman wished to pay him a visit. An order was accordingly issued that the sword should be removed. The services of the Bhatrazu greatly pleased the commanders, and they came to regard the Bhatrazus as their dependants, and treated them with consideration. Even at the present day, at a marriage among the Kapus, Kammas, and Velamas, a Bhatrazu is engaged. His duties are to assist the bridegroom in his wedding toilette, to paint sectarian marks on his forehead, and to remain as his personal attendant throughout the marriage ceremonies. He further sings stanzas from the Ramayana or Mahabharata, and songs in praise of Brahmans and the caste to which the bridal couple belong. The following was sung at a Kapu wedding.

"Anna Vema Reddi piled up money like a



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mountain, and, with his brother Pinna Brahma Reddi, constructed agraharams. Gone Buddha Reddi spent large sums of money for the reading of the Ramayana, and heard it with much interest. Panta Malla Reddi caused several tanks to be dug. You, their descendants, are all prosperous, and very charitable."

In the houses of Kammas, the following is recited. "Of the seventy-seven sons, **Bobbali Narasanna** was a very brave man, and was told to go in search of the kamma (an ornament) without using abusive language. Those who ran away are **Velamas**, and those who secured it **Kammas**."

In their ceremonial observances, the Bhatrazus closely follow the standard Telugu type. At marriages, the bridal couple sit on the dais on a plank of **juvvi** (*Ficus Tsiela*) wood. They have the Telugu Janappans as their disciples, and are the only non- Brahman caste, except Jangams and Pandarams, which





performs the duties of guru or religious instructor. The badge of the Bhatrazus at Conjeeveram is a silver stick.\*

\* J. S. F. Mackenzie, Ind. Ant. IV, 1875.

In the Madras Census Report, 1901, Bhato, Kani Razu, Kannaji Bhat and Padiga Raju appear as synonyms, and **Annaji Bhat** as a sub-caste of Bhatrazus.

The following account of a criminal class, calling themselves **Batturajas** or **Battu Turakas**, was published in the Police Weekly Circular, Madras, in 1881.\*

\* See F. S. MuUaly. Notes on Criminal Classes of the Madras Presidency.

"They are known to the Cuddapah and North Arcot Police as criminals, and a note is made whenever an adult leaves his village; but, as they commit their depredations far from home, and convert their spoil into hard cash before they return, it is difficult to get evidence against



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them. Ten or twelve of these leave home at once ; they usually work in parties of three or four, and they are frequently absent for months together. They have methods of communicating intelligence to their associates when separated from them, but the only one of these methods that is known is by means of their leaf plates, which they sew in a peculiar manner, and leave after use in certain places previously agreed upon. These leaf plates can be recognised by experts, but all that these experts can learn from them is that Battu Turakas have been the neighbourhood recently.

“On their return to their village, an account of their proceedings is rendered, and their spoil is divided equally among the whole community, a double share being, however, given to the actual thief or thieves. They usually disguise themselves as Brahmans, and, in the search of some of their houses lately, silk cloths worn only by Brahmans were found together with other articles necessary for the purpose (**rudraksha**



necklaces, salagrama stones, etc.).

“They are also instructed in Sanskrit, and in all the outward requisites of Brahmanism. A Telugu Brahman would soon find out that they are not Brahmans, and it is on this account that they confine their depredations to the Tamil country, where allowance is made for them as rude uncivilized Telugus. They frequent **choultries** (travellers' resting-places), where their very respectable appearance disarms suspicion, and watch for opportunities of committing thefts, substituting their own bags or bundles (filled with rubbish) for those they carry off.”

To this account Mr. M. Paupa Rao Naidu adds\* that "it is during festivals and feasts that they very often commit thefts of the jewels and cloths of persons bathing in the tanks. They are thus known as **Kolamchuthi Papar**, meaning that they are Brahmins that live by stealing around the tanks. Before the introduction of railways, their depredations were mostly





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confined to the choultries and tanks."

\* History of Railway Thieves, Madras, 1904.

Concerning the Bhattu Turakas of the North Arcot district, Mr. H. A. Stuart writes\* that "a few of this very intelligent and educated criminal class are found in the north-west of the Chendragiri taluk, and in the north of Punganur. They are really Muhammadans, but never worship according to the rules of that religion, and know little about its tenets. They have no employment save cheating, and in this they are incomparably clever. They speak several languages with perfect fluency, have often studied Sanskrit, and are able to personate any caste. Having marked down a well-to-do householder, they take an opportunity of entering his service, and succeed at last in gaining his confidence. They then abuse it by absconding with what they can lay hands upon. They often take to false coining and forgery, pretend to know medicine, to have the power of



making gold or precious stones, or of turning currency notes into others of higher value."

\* Manual of the North Arcot district.

**Bhayipuo.** Bhayipuo is returned, in the Census Report, 1901, as an Oriya caste, the members of which claim to be Kshatriyas. The word means brother's son, in which sense it is applied to the issue of the brothers of Rajahs by concubines. The illegitimate children of Rajahs are also classed as Bhayipuo.

**Bhima.**—A section of Savaras, named after Bhima, one of the Pandava brothers.

**Bholia** (wild dog).—An exogamous sept of **Kondra**.

**Bhondari.**—The Bhondaris are the barbers of the Oriya country, living in Ganjam. "The name Bhondari," Mr. S. P. Rice writes,\* is "derived from **bhondaram**, treasure. The zamindars delivered over the guarding of the treasure to the professional barbers, who became a more



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important person in this capacity than in his original office of shaver in ordinary to His Highness."

\* Occasional Essays on Native South Indian Life

The Bhondaris occupy a higher position than the Tamil and Telugu barbers. Though various Oriya castes bathe after being shaved, the touch of a Bhondari at other times is not regarded as polluting. All over the Ganjam district, the Bhondaris are employed as domestic servants, and some are engaged as coolies, cart-drivers, etc. Others officiate as pujaris (priests) at Takurani (village deity) temples, grind sandalwood, or make flower garlands.

On the occasion of ceremonial processions, the washing of the feet of the guests, carrying articles required for worship, and the jewels and cloths to be worn by the bridal couple on the wedding day, are performed by the Bhondari.

I am informed that a woman of this caste is





employed by **Karnams** on the occasion of marriage and other ceremonials, at which her services are indispensable. It is said that in some places, where the Bhondaris do not shave castes lower than the Gudiyas, Oriya Brahmans allow them to remove the leaf plates off which they have taken their food, though this should not be done by a non- Brahman.

There are apparently three endogamous subdivisions, named **Godomalia**, **Odisi**, and **Bejjo**. The word Godomalia means a group of forts, and it is said to be the duty of members of this section to serve Rajahs who live in forts. The Godomalias are most numerous in Ganjam, where they claim to be superior to the Odisi and Bejjo sections.

Among exogamous septs, Mohiro (peacock), Dhippo (light), Oppomarango (*Achyranthes aspera*), and Nagasira (cobra) may be noted. Members of the Oppomarango sept do not touch, or use the root of the plant as a tooth brush. Lights may not be blown out with the



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breath, or otherwise extinguished by members of the Dhippo sept ; and they do not light their lamps unless they are *madi*, i.e., wearing silk cloths, or cloths washed and dried after bathing.

Nagasira is a sept common to many Oriya castes, and is said to owe its origin to the influence of Oriya Brahmans.

The hereditary headman of the caste is called **Behara**, and he is assisted by a **Bhollobaya**. Most of the Bhondaris follow the form of Vaishnavism inculcated by **Chaithyana**, and known as **Paramartho matham**. They wear as a necklace a string of tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*) beads, without which they will not worship or take their food. Many Hindu deities, especially **Jagannatha**, and various local Takuranis are also worshipped by them.

A man should not marry his maternal uncle's or paternal aunt's daughter. Infant marriage is the rule, and, if a girl has not secured a husband before she attains maturity, she has to go through a mock marriage ceremony called



**dharma bibha**. She is taken to a *Streblus asper* (**sahada** or shadi) tree, and married to it. She may not, during the rest of her life, touch the Streblus tree, or use its twigs as a tooth brush.

Sometimes she goes through the ceremony of marriage with some elderly man, preferably her grandfather, or, failing him, her elder sister's husband as bridegroom. A divorce agreement (**tsado patro**) is drawn up, and the pseudo-marriage thereby dissolved. Sometimes the bridegroom is represented by a bow and arrow, and the ceremony is called **khando bibha**.

The real marriage ceremonies last over seven days. On the day before the **bibha** (wedding), a number of earthen pots are placed on a spot which has been cleaned for their reception, and some married women throw *Zizyphus Jujuba* leaves and rice, apparently as an evil-eye removing and purificatory ceremony. While doing so, they cry "*Ulu, ulu*" in a manner which recalls to mind the **kulavi idal** of the Maravans and Kallans.





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A ceremony, called **sokko bhondo**, or wheel worship, is performed to a potter's wheel. The bridegroom, who has to fast until the night, is shaved, after which he stands on a grindstone and bathes. While he is so doing, some women bring a grinding-mill stone, and grind to powder *Vigna Catiang*, *Cajanus indicus* and *Cicer arietinum* seeds, crying "Ulu, ulu," as they do so.

The bridegroom then dresses himself, and sits on the marriage dais, while a number of married women crowd round him, each of whom touches an areca nut placed on his head seven times with a grinding stone. They also perform the ceremony called **bhondaivaro**, which consists in throwing *Zizyphus Jujuba* leaves, and rice dyed with turmeric, over the bridegroom, again calling out "Olu, ulu."

Towards evening, the bridegroom's party proceed in procession to a temple, taking with them the various articles required on the morrow, such as the sacred thread, jewels,



cloths, and **mokkuto** (forehead ornament). After worshipping the god, they return home, and on the way thither collect water in a vessel from seven houses, to be used by the bridegroom when he bathes next day.

A ceremonial very similar to that performed by the bridegroom on the eve of the wedding is also performed by the bride and her party. On the wedding day, the bridegroom, after worshipping Vigneswara (Ganesa) at the marriage dais with the assistance of a Brahman purohit, proceeds, dressed up in his marriage finery, mokkuto, sacred thread and wrist thread, to a temple in a palanquin, and worships there.

Later on, he goes to the bride's house in a palanquin. Just as he is about to start, his brother's wife catches hold of the palanquin, and will not let him go till she has received a present of a new cloth. He is met en route by the bride's father, and his feet are washed by her brother. His future father-in-law, after waving seven balls of coloured rice before him,



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escorts him to his house.

At the entrance thereto, a number of women, including the bride's mother, await his arrival, and, on his approach, throw *Zizyphus Jujuba* leaves, and cry "Ulu, ulu." His future mother-in-law, taking him by the hand, leads him into the house. As soon as he has reached the marriage dais, the bride is conducted thither by her maternal uncle, and throws some salt over a screen on to the bridegroom.

Later on, she takes her seat by his side, and the Brahman purohit, after doing *homam* (making sacred fire), ties the hands of the contracting couple together with dharbha grass. This is called **hastagonthi**, and is the binding portion of the marriage ceremony. The bride and bridegroom then exchange ten areca nuts and ten myrabolams (*Terminalia fruits*).

Two new cloths are thrown over them, and the ends thereof are tied together in a knot containing twenty-one cowry (*Cyprœa Arabica*) shells, a coin, and a few *Zizyphus* leaves. This





ceremonial is called **gontiyalo**. The bride's brother strikes the bridegroom with his fist, and receives a present of a cloth. At this stage, the couple receive presents from relations and friends. They then play seven times with cowry shells, and the ceremonial closes with the throwing of Zizyphus leaves, and the eating by the bride and bridegroom of rice mixed with jaggery (crude sugar) and curds.

On the two following days, they sit on the dais, play with cowries, and have leaves and rice thrown over them. They wear the cloths given to them on the wedding day, and may not bathe in a tank (pond) or river. On the fourth day (**chauti**), the bride is received into the gotra of the bridegroom. In token thereof, she cooks some food given to her by the bridegroom, and the pair make a show of partaking thereof.

Towards the evening the bride is conducted by her maternal uncle to near the dais, and she stands on a grinding stone. Seven turns of thread dyed with turmeric are wound round the



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posts of the dais. Leading his wife thither, the bridegroom cuts the thread, and the couple stand on the dais, while four persons support a cloth canopy over their heads, and rice is scattered over them. On the fifth day, the newly-married couple and their relations indulge in throwing turmeric water over each other. Early on the morning of the sixth day, the bridegroom breaks a pot placed on the dais, and goes away in feigned anger to the house of a relation. Towards evening, he is brought back by his brother-in-law, and plays at cowries with the bride.

The **Bhondaivaro** ceremony is once more repeated. On the seventh day, the sacred thread, wrist-threads and **mo kkuto** are removed.

Widows and divorcees are permitted to remarry. As among various other castes, a widow should marry her deceased husband's younger brother.

The dead are cremated. When a person is on



the point of death, a little **Jagannatha prasadam**, i.e., rice from the temple at Puri, is placed in his mouth. Members of many Oriya castes keep by them partially cooked rice, called **nirmalyam**, brought from this temple, and a little of this is eaten by the orthodox before meals and after bathing. The corpse is washed, anointed, and wrapped in a new cloth. After it has been secured on the bier, a new red cloth is thrown over it.

At the head, a sheaf of straw, from the roof of the house, if it is thatched, is placed. The funeral pyre is generally prepared by an Oriya washerman. At the burning-ground, the corpse is placed close to the pyre, and the son puts into the mouth some parched rice, and throws rice over the eyes. Then, lighting the straw, he waves it thrice round the corpse, and throws it on the face.

The corpse is then carried thrice round the pyre, and laid thereon. In the course of cremation, each mourner throws a log on the





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pyre. The son goes home, wet and dripping, after bathing. On the following day, the fire is extinguished, and two fragments of bone are placed in a small pot, and carefully preserved. The ashes are heaped up, and an image is drawn on the ground with a stick, to which food is offered. A meal, called **pithapona** (bitter food), consisting of rice and margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves, is partaken of by agnates only.

On the tenth day, the relatives and intimate friends of the deceased are shaved, the son last of all. The son and the agnates go to a tank bund (pond embankment), and cook food in a new pot within a shed which has been specially constructed for the occasion.

The pot is then broken into ten fragments, on which food is placed, and offered to the dead person. The son takes the fragments, one by one, to the tank, bathing each time. The pot containing the two pieces of bone is generally buried beneath a pipal (*Ficus religiosa*) tree



growing near a tank.

On the tenth day, after the offering of food, the son proceeds to this spot, and, after pouring water ten times over the ground beneath which the pot is buried, takes the pot home, and buries it near the house. As he approaches his home, he goes ahead of those who accompany him, and, carrying a vessel filled with water, pours some of this three times on the ground, waving his hand in a circular manner. He then makes three marks with a piece of iron on the ground. A piece of hollow bamboo open at both ends, or other grain measure, is given to him, with which he measures rice or other grain seven times. He then throws the measure behind him between his heels, and, entering the house, puts a sect mark on his forehead with the aid of a broken looking-glass, which must be thrown away. Ghi (clarified butter) and meat may not be eaten by those under death pollution till the eleventh day, when a feast is held.



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If an important elder of the community dies, a ceremony called **jola-jola handi** (pot drilled with holes) is performed on the night of the tenth day. Fine sand is spread over the floor of a room having two doors, and the surface is smoothed with a tray or plank. On the sand a lighted lamp is placed, with an areca nut by its side. The lamp is covered with an earthen cooking-pot. Two men carry on their shoulders a pot riddled with holes, suspended from a pole made of *Diospyros Embryopteris* wood, from inside the room into the street, as soon as the lamp is covered by the cooking-pot. Both doors of the room are then closed, and not opened till the return of the men.

The pot which they carry is believed to increase in weight as they bear it to a tank, into which it is thrown. On their return to the house, they tap three times at the door, which then opens. All present then crowd into the room, and examine the sand for the marks of the foot-prints of a bull, cat or man, the trail of a





centipede, cart-track, ladder, etc., which are believed to be left by the dead person when he goes to the other world.

Opprobrious names are very common among the Bhondaris, especially if a child is born **after a succession of deaths** among the offspring of a family. Very common among such names are those of low castes, e.g., **Haddi, Bavuria, Dandasi**, etc.

**Bhonjo.**--The title of the Raja of Gumsur in Ganjam.

**Bhumanchi** (good earth).—A sub-division of Kapu.

**Bhu** (earth) **Razu.**—A name for Razus who live in the plains, in contradistinction to the Konda Razus who live in the hills.

**Bhu Vaisya** (earth Vaisya).—A name returned by some Nattukottai Chettis and Vellalas.

**Bhumi Dhompthi.**—The name, meaning earth marriage offering-, of a sub-division of



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Madigas, at whose marriages the offering of food is placed on the ground.

**Bhumi Razulu** (kings of the earth).—A name assumed by some Koyis.

**Bhumia**.—The Bhumias are an Oriya caste of hill cultivators, found in the Jeypore Zamindari. According to a tradition, they were the first to cultivate the land on the hills. In the Central Provinces they are said to be known as Baigas, concerning whom Captain Ward writes\* that "the decision of the Baiga in a boundary dispute is almost always accepted as final, and, from this right as children of the soil and arbiters of the land belonging to each village, they are said to have derived their title of Bhumia, the Sanskrit bhumi meaning the earth."

\* Gazetteer of the Central Provinces, 1870.

For the following note I am indebted to Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao. The Bhumias have septs, e.g., **bhag** (tiger) and **naga** (cobra).



A man can claim his paternal aunt's daughter in marriage. The marriage ceremonial is much the same as among the **Bottadas**. The **jholla tonk** (presents) consist of liquor, rice, a sheep or fowl, and cloths for the parents of the bride. A pandal (booth), made of poles of the sorghi tree, is erected in front of the bridegroom's house, and a Desari officiates.

The remarriage of widows is permitted and a younger brother usually marries his elder brother's widow. If a man divorces his wife, it is customary for him to give her a rupee and a new cloth in compensation. The dead are burned, and pollution lasts for nine days. On the tenth day a ceremonial bath is taken, and a feast, with copious supplies of liquor, is held. In parts of the Central Provinces the dead are buried, and two or three flat stones are set up over the grave.\*

\* Report of the Ethnological Committee of the Central Provinces,





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**Bhuri.**—A sub-division of Gond.

**Bijam** (seed).—An exogamous sept of Boya.

**Bilpathri** (bael : *Ægle Marmelos*).—An exogamous sept of Boya.

**Bindhani** (workman).—A title of Oriya **Badhoyis**, and sometimes used as the name of the caste.

**Bingi.**—The **Bingivandlu** are described, in the Kurnool Manual, as a class of mendicants, who play dramas. Some of them have shrotiyam villages, as **Lingineni Doddi** in Pattikonda. "Shrotiyam " has been defined t as \* "lands, or a village, held at a favourable rate, properly an assignment of land or revenue to a Brahman learned in the Vedas, but latterly applied generally to similar assignments to native servants of the government, civil or military, and both Hindus and Muhammadans, as a reward for past services."

\* Wilson. Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms.



**Bhutiannaya** (ashes).—An exogamous sept of Bant.

**Bidaru** (wanderers).—A sub-division of Odde.

**Bilimagga**.—The Bilimagga weavers of South Canara, who speak a very corrupt form of Tamil, **must not be confused** with the Bilimaggas of Mysore, whose mother-tongue is Canarese.

In some places the Bilimaggas of South Canara call themselves Padma Sales, but they **have no connection** with the Padma Sale caste. There is a tradition that they emigrated from Pandiya Maduradesa in the Tamil country. The caste name Bilimagga (white loom) is derived from the fact that they weave only white cloths.

In some places, for the same reason, Devangas call themselves Bilimaggas, but the Devangas also make coloured cloths. White cloths are required for certain gods and bhuthas (devils) on occasions of festivals, and these are



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usually obtained from Bilimaggas. The Bilimaggas follow the makkala santana law of inheritance (from father to son). They are said to have seven **gotras**, and those of the Mangalore, Kundapur, and Udipi taluks, are stated to belong respectively to the 800, 700, and 500 nagaras. The caste deities are Virabhadra, Brahmalinga, and Ammanoru.

For the whole community, there is a chief headman called **Paththukku Solra Settigar**, or the Setti who advises the ten, and for every village there is an ordinary headman styled **Gurikara**. The chief headman is usually the manager of some temple of the caste, and the Gurikara has to collect the dues from the members of the community. Every married couple has to pay an annual tax of twelve annas, and every unmarried male over twelve years of age of six annas towards the temple fund. Marriage of girls before puberty is the rule, and any girl who attains maturity without being married runs the risk of losing her caste.





The remarriage of widows is permitted. The betrothal ceremony is important as being binding as a contract. It consists in the father of the girl giving betel leaves and areca nuts in a tray to the father of her future husband, before a number of people. If the contract is dissolved before the marriage is celebrated, betel and nuts must be presented to the father of the girl, in the presence of an assembly, as a sign that the engagement is broken off. On the day previous to the marriage ceremonial, the fathers of the contracting couple exchange betel leaves and areca nuts three times.

On the following morning, they proceed to the house of the bridegroom, the bride's father carrying a brass vessel containing water. From this vessel, water is poured into smaller vessels by an odd number of women (five or more). These women are usually selected by the wife of the headman. The pouring of the water must be carried out according to a recognised code of precedence, which varies with the locality.



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At Udipi, for example, the order is Mangalore, Barkur, Udipi. The women all pour water over the head of the bridegroom.

The rite is called **mariyathe niru** (water for respect). The bridegroom is then decorated, and a **bashingam** (chaplet) is placed on his forehead. He sits in front of a brass vessel, called Ganapathi (the elephant god), which is placed on a small quantity of rice spread on the floor, and worships it. He is then conducted to the marriage pandal (booth) by his sister's husband, followed by his sister carrying the brass vessel and a **gindi** (vessel with a spout), to which the bride's bashingam and the tali (marriage badge) are tied.

A red cloth, intended for the bride, must also be carried by her. Within the pandal, the bridegroom stands in front of a cot. The bride's party, and the men in attendance on the bridegroom, stand opposite each other with the bridegroom between them, and throw rice over each other.



All are then seated, except the bridegroom, his sister, and the bride's brother. The bridegroom's father waves incense in front of the cot and brass vessel, and hands over the gindi, and other articles, to the bridegroom's sister, to be taken to the bride. Lights and *arathi* water are waved before the bridegroom, and, while the bride's father holds his hands, her brother washes his feet.

He then goes seven times round the cot, after he has worshipped it, and broken cocoanuts, varying in number according to the *nagara* to which he belongs—seven if he is a member of the seven hundred nagara, and so on. He next takes his seat on the cot, and is joined by the bride, who has had the bashingam put on her forehead, and the tali tied on her neck, by the bridegroom's sister.

Those assembled then call the maternal uncles of the bridal couple, and they approach the cot. The bridegroom's uncle gives the red cloth already referred to, to the uncle of the





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bride. The bride retires within the house, followed by her maternal uncle, and sits cross-legged, holding her big toes with her hands. Her uncle throws the red cloth over her head, and she covers her face with it. This is called **devagiri udugare**.

The uncle then carries her to the pandal, and she sits on the left of the bridegroom. The Gurikara asks the maternal uncle of the bridegroom to hand over the bride's money, amounting to twelve rupees or more. He then requests permission of the three nagara people, seven gotra people, and the relatives of the bride and bridegroom to proceed with the dhare ceremony. This being accorded, the maternal uncles unite the hands of the pair, and, after the cloth has been removed from the bride's face, the dhare water is poured over their hands, first by the bride's father, and then by the Gurikara, who, while doing so, declares the union of the couple according to the observances of the three nagaras.



Those assembled throw rice on, and give presents to the bride and bridegroom. The presents are called **moi**, and the act of giving them **moi baikradhu** (Tamil). Some women wave **arathi**, and the pair go inside the house, and sit on a mat. Some milk is given to the bridegroom by the bride's sister, and, after sipping a little of it, he gives it to the bride. They then return to the pandal, and sit on the cot.

Rice is thrown over their heads, and arathi waved in front of them. The bridegroom drops a ring into a tray, and turmeric-water is poured over it. The couple search for the ring. The wedding ceremonies are brought to a close by bathing in turmeric-water (vokli bath), after which the couple sit on the cot, and those assembled permit the handing over of the bride to the bridegroom's family (**pennu oppuchchu kodukradhu**).

Any number of marriages, except three or seven, may be carried on simultaneously beneath a single pandal. If there are more than



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a single bridal couple, the bashingam is worn only by the pair who are the elder, or held in most respect. Sometimes, one couple is allowed to wear the bashingam, and another to have the dhare water first poured over them.

The dead are cremated. The corpse is carried to the burning-ground on a bier, with a tender plantain leaf placed beneath it. Fire is carried not by the son, but by some other near relative. The ashes are collected on the third day, and a mound (**dhupe**) is made therewith. Daily until the final death ceremony, a tender cocoanut, and water in a vessel, are placed near it.

In the final death ceremony (bojja), the Bilimaggas closely follow the Bants, except as regards the funeral car. To get rid of death pollution, a **Tulu Madivali** (washerman caste) gives cloths to, and sprinkles water over those under pollution. The caste title is Setti or Chetti.

**Billai-kavu** (cat-eaters).— Said to be Mala Paidis, who eat cats.





**Billava.**—The Billavas are the Tulu-speaking toddy-drawers of the South Canara district. It is noted, in the Manual, that they are "the numerically largest caste in the district, and form close upon one-fifth of the total population. The derivation of the word Billava, as commonly accepted in the district, is that it is a contraction of **Billinavaru**, bowmen, and that the name was given as the men of that caste were formerly largely employed as bowmen by the ancient native rulers of the district.

There is, however, no evidence whatever, direct or indirect, to show that the men of the toddy-drawing caste were in fact so employed. It is well known that, both before and after the Christian era, there were invasions and occupations of the northern part of Ceylon by the races then inhabiting Southern India, and Malabar tradition tells that some of these Dravidians migrated from I ram or Ceylon northwards to Travancore and other parts of the West Coast of India, bringing with them the



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cocoanut or southern tree (*tenginamara*), and being known as Tivars (islanders) or Iravars, which names have since been altered to Tiyars and Ilavars. This derivation would also explain the name Divaru or **Halepaik Divaru** borne by the same class of people in the northern part of the district, and in North Canara.

In **Manjarabad** above the ghauts, which, with Tuluva, was in olden days under the rule of the Humcha family, known later as the **Bairasu Wodears** of Karakal, they are called **Devaru Makkalu**, literally God's children, but more likely a corruption of Tivaru Makkalu, children of the islanders.

In support of this tradition, Mr. Logan has pointed out\* that, in the list of exports from Malabar given in the Periplus, in the first century A.D., no mention is made of the cocoanut. It was, however, mentioned by **Cosmos Indico Pleustes** (522 to 547 A.D.), and from the Syrian Christians' copper-plate grants, early in the ninth century, it appears that the Tiyans were at



that time an organised guild of professional planters.

\* Manual of Malabar.

“Although the cocoanut tree may have been introduced by descendants of immigrants from Ceylon moving up the coast, the practice of planting and drawing toddy was no doubt taken up by the ordinary Tulu cultivators, and, whatever the origin of the name Billava may be, they are an essentially Tulu class of people, following the prevailing rule that property vests in females, and devolves in the female line."

It is worthy of note that the Billavas differ from the Tiyaṇs in one very important physical character—the cranial type. For, as shown by the following table, whereas the Tiyaṇs are dolichocephalic the Billavas are, like other Tulu classes, sub-brachycephalic :

<i>Cephalic Index.</i>						
—			Average.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Number of times exceeding 80.
40	Tiyans	... ..	73	78·7	68·5	1
50	Billavas	... ..	80	91·5	71	28





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Some Billavas about Udipi call themselves either **Billavaru** or **Halepaikaru**. But the Halepaiks proper are toddy-drawers, who are found in the Kundapur taluk, and speak Kanarese. There are said to be certain differences between the two classes in the method of carrying out the process of drawing toddy.

For example, the Halepaiks generally **grasp the knife with the fingers directed upwards and the thumb to the right**, while the Billavas hold the knife with the fingers directed downwards and the thumb to the left.

A Billava at Udipi had a broad iron knife with a round hole at the base, by which it was attached to an iron hook fixed on to a rope worn round the loins. For crushing the flower-buds within the spathe of the palm, Billavas generally use a stone, and the Halepaiks a bone.

There is a belief that, if the spathe is beaten with the bone of a buffalo which has been killed by a tiger, the yield of toddy will, if the bone has



not touched the ground, be greater than if an ordinary bone is used.

The Billavas generally carry a long gourd, and the Halepaiks a pot, for collecting the toddy in.

**Baidya** and **Pujari** occur as caste names of the Billavas, and also as a suffix to the name, e.g., Saiyina Baidya, Bomma Pujari.

Baidya is said to be a form of Vaidya, meaning a physician. Some Billavas officiate as priests (pujaris) at **bhutasthanas** (devil shrines) and **garidis**. Many of these pujaris are credited with the power of invoking the aid of bhutas, and curing disease.

The following legend is narrated, to account for the use of the name Baidya. A poor woman once lived at Ullal with two sons. A Sanyasi (religious ascetic), pitying their condition, took the sons as his sishtyas, with a view to training them as magicians and doctors. After some time, the Sanyasi went away from Ullal for a short time, leaving the lads there with



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instructions that they should not be married until his return.

In spite of his instructions, however, they married, and, on his return, he was very angry, and went away again, followed by his two disciples. On his journey, the Sanyasi crossed the ferry near Ullal on foot. This the disciples attempted to do, and were on the point of drowning when the Sanyasi threw three handfuls of books on medicine and magic. Taking these, the two disciples returned, and became learned in medicine and magic. They are supposed to be the ancestors of the Billavas. The Billavas, like the Bants, have a number of exogamous septs (balls) running in the female line.

There is a popular belief that these are subdivisions of the twenty balis which ought to exist according to the Aliya Santana system (inheritance in the female line).



BILLAVA TODDY-TAPPER.





The caste has a headman called Gurikara, whose office is hereditary, and passes to the aliya (sister's son). Affairs which affect the community as a whole are discussed at a meeting held at the bhutasthana or garidi.

At the betrothal ceremony, the bride-price (**sirdachchi**), varying from ten to twenty rupees, is fixed. A few days before the wedding, the maternal uncle of the bride, or the Gurikara, ties a jewel on her neck, and a pandal (booth) is erected, and decorated by the caste barber (**parel maddiyali**) with cloths of different colours.

If the bridegroom is an adult, the bride has to undergo a **purificatory** ceremony a day or two before the marriage (dhare) day. A few women, usually near relations of the girl, go to a tank (pond) or well near a Bhutasthana or garidi, and bring water thence in earthenware pots.

The water is poured over the head of the girl, and she bathes. On the wedding day, the bride and bridegroom are seated on two planks placed on the dais. The barber arranges the



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various articles, such as lights, rice, flowers, betel leaves and areca nuts, and a vessel filled with water, which are required for the ceremonial. He joins the hands of the contracting couple, and their parents, or the headman, place the nose-screw of the bridesmaid on their hands, and pour the dhare water over them. This is the binding part of the ceremony, which is called **kai** (hand) **dhare**.

Widow remarriage is called **bidu dhare**, and the pouring of water is omitted. The bride and bridegroom stand facing each other, and a cloth is stretched between them. The headman unites their hands beneath the screen.

If a man has intercourse with a woman, and she becomes pregnant, he has to marry her according to the bidu dhare rite. Before the marriage ceremony is performed, he has to grasp a plantain tree with his right hand, and the tree is then cut down. At the first menstrual period, a girl is under pollution for ten or twelve days. On the first day, she is seated within a



square (**muggu**), and five or seven cocoanuts are tied together so as to form a seat.

A new earthenware pot is placed at each corner of the square. Four girls from the Gurikara's house sit at the corners close to the pots. Betel leaves, areca nuts, and turmeric paste are distributed among the assembled females, and the girls pour water from the pots over the head of the girl.

Again, on the eleventh or the thirteenth day, the girl sits within the square, and water is poured over her as before. She then bathes. The dead are usually cremated, though, in some cases, burial is resorted to. The corpse is washed and laid on a plantain leaf, and a new cloth is thrown over it.

Some paddy (unhusked rice) is heaped up near the head and feet, and cocoanut cups containing lighted wicks are placed thereon. All the relations and friends assembled at the house dip leafy twigs of the tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*) in water, and allow it to drop into the





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mouth of the corpse. The body is carried on a plank to the burning-ground. The collection of wood for the pyre, or the digging of the grave, is the duty of Holeyas.

The wood of *Strychnos Nux-vomica* should never be used for the pyre. This is lighted by placing fire at the two ends thereof. When the flames meet in the middle, the plantain leaf, paddy, etc., which have been brought from the house, are thrown into them. On the fifth day, the ashes are collected, and buried on the spot. If the body has been buried, a straw figure is made, and burnt over the grave, and the ashes are buried there.

A small conical mound, called dhupe, is made there, and a tulsi plant stuck in it. By the side of the plant a tender cocoanut with its eyes opened, tobacco leaf, betel leaves and areca nuts are placed. On the thirteenth day, the final death ceremonies, or bojja, are performed. On the evening of the previous day, four poles, for the construction of the **upparige** or **gudikattu**



(car), are planted round the dhupe.

At the house, on or near the spot where the deceased breathed his last, a small bamboo car, in three tiers, is constructed, and decorated with coloured cloths. This car is called **Nirneralu**.

A lamp is suspended from the car, and a cot placed on the ground beneath it, and the jewels and clothes of the dead person are laid thereon. On the following morning, the **upparige** is constructed, with the assistance of the caste barber. A small vessel, filled with water, is placed within the Nirneralu. The sons-in-law of the deceased receive a present of new cloths, and, after bathing, they approach the Nirneralu. The chief mourner takes the vessel from within it, and pours the water at the foot of a cocoanut tree. The chief Gurikara pours some water into the empty vessel and the chief mourner places it within the Nirneralu. Then seven women measure out some rice three times, and pour the rice into a tray held by three women. The



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rice is taken to a well, and washed, and then brought back to the car. Jaggery (crude sugar) and cocoanut scrapings are mixed with the rice, which is placed in a cup by seven women.

The cup is deposited within the car on the cot. The wife or husband of the deceased throws a small quantity of rice into the cup. She turns the cup, and a ladle placed by its side, upside down, and covers them with a plantain leaf. The various articles are collected, and tied up in a bundle, which is placed in a palanquin, and carried in procession, by two men to the upparige, which has been constructed over the dhupe.

Nalkes and **Paravas** (devil-dancers), dressed up as bhutas, may follow the procession. Those present go thrice round the upparige, and the chief mourner unties the bundle, and place its contents on the car. The near relations put rice, and sometimes vegetables, pumpkins, and plantains, on the plantain leaf. All present then leave the spot, and the barber removes the





cloths from the car, and pulls it down. Sometimes, if the dead person has been an important member of the community, a small car is constructed, and taken in procession round the upparige.

On the fourteenth day, food is offered to crows, and the death ceremonies are at an end.

If a death occurs on an inauspicious day, a ceremony called **Kale deppuni** (driving away the ghost) is performed. Ashes are spread on the floor of the house, and the door is closed. After some time, or on the following day, the roof of the house is sprinkled with turmeric water, and beaten with twigs of *Zizyphus Ænoplia*. The door is then opened, and the ashes are examined, to see if the marks of the cloven feet of the ghost are left thereon. If the marks are clear, it is a sign that the ghost has departed ; otherwise a magician is called in to drive it out.

A correspondent naively remarks that, when he has examined the marks, they were those of the family cat.



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In some cases, girls who have died unmarried are supposed to haunt the house, and bring trouble thereto, and they must be propitiated by marriage. The girl's relations go in search of a dead boy, and take from the house where he is a quarter of an anna, which is tied up between two spoons. The spoons are tied to the roof of the girl's house. This represents the betrothal ceremony. A day is fixed for the marriage, and, on the appointed day, two figures, representing the bride and bridegroom, are drawn on the floor, with the hands lying one on the other. A quarter-anna, black beads, bangles, and a nose-screw, are placed on the hands, and water is poured on them. This is symbolical of the dhare ceremony, and completes the marriage.

The pujaris of all the bhuthasthanas and garidis are Billavas. The bhutha temples called garidis belong to the Billavas, and the bhuthas are the **Baiderukulu** (Koti and Chennayya), Brimmeru (or Brahmeru) Gunda, Okka Ballala, Kujumba Ganja, and Devanajiri.



The Baiderkulu are believed to be fellow castemen of the Billavas, and Koti and Chennayya to be descended from an excommunicated Brahman girl and a Billava. The legend of Koti and Chennayya is recorded at length by Mr. A. C. Burnell in the Indian Antiquary.\*

\* Devil worship of the Tuhivas, Ind. Ant. XXIII, XXIV, and XXV, 1894-96.

The bhuthas are represented by idols. Brimmeru is the most important, and the others are subordinate to him. He is represented by a plate of silver or other metal, bearing the figure of a human being, which is kept within a car-like stone structure within the shrine. On its left are two human figures made of clay or stone, which represent the Baiderukulu.

On the right are a man on horseback, and another figure, representing Okka Ballala and Kujumba Ganja. Other idols are also set up at the garidi, but outside the main room. They





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seem to vary in different localities, and represent bhuthas such as Jumadi, Pancha Jumadi, Hosabhutha, Kallurti, etc.

Brimmeru has been transformed, by Brahman ingenuity, into Brahma, and all the bhuthas are converted into Gonas, or attendants on Siva. In the pardhanas (devil songs) Brimmeru is represented as the principal bhutha, and the other bhuthas are supposed to visit his sthana.

A bhuthasthana never contains idols, but cots are usually found therein. A sthana may be dedicated to a single bhutha, or to several bhuthas. and the number may be ascertained by counting the number of cots, of which each is set apart for a single bhutha. If the sthana is dedicated to more than one bhutha, the bhuthas are generally Kodamanithaya, Kukkinathaya, and Daiva.

All the arrangements for the periodical kola, or festival of the bhuthasthana, are made by the pujari. During the festival, he frequently becomes possessed. Only such Billavas as are



liable to be possessed are recognised as pujaris. As a sign of their office, they wear a gold bangle on the right wrist. Further details in connection with bhutha worship will be found in the articles on Bants, Nalkes, and Paravas.

**Bilva** (jackal).—An exogamous sept of **Kondra**.

**Bindhollu** (brass water-pot).—An exogamous sept of **Jogi**.

**Binu** (roll of woollen thread).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba.

**Bissoyi**.—The **Parlakimedi Maliahs** are, I am informed, divided up into muttahs, and each muttah contains many villages, all ruled over by a Bissoyi, a sort of feudal chief, who is responsible for keeping them in order. Concerning the Bissoyis, Mr. S. P. Rice writes \* that in the **Maliahs** “are a number of forts, in which the Bissoyis, or hill chieftains, reside. Each them holds a small court of his own ; each has his armed retainers, and his executive staff.



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They were set to rule over the hill tracts, to curb the lawlessness of the aboriginal tribes of the mountains, the Khonds and the Savaras. They were, in fact, lords of the marches, and were in a measure independent, but they appear to have been under the suzerainty of the Raja of Kimedi, and they were also generally responsible to Government. Such men were valuable friends and dangerous enemies. Their influence among their own men was complete ; their knowledge of their own country was perfect. It was they, and they only, who could thread their way through the tangled and well-nigh impenetrable jungle by foot-paths known only to themselves. Hence, when they became enemies, they could entrench themselves in positions which were almost impenetrable. Now a road leads to every fort ; the jungles have disappeared ; the Bissoyis still have armed retainers, and still keep a measure of respect ; but their sting is gone, and the officer of Government goes round every year on the





peaceful, if prosaic occupation of examining schools and inspecting vaccination."

\* Occasional Essays on Native South Indian Life.

The story of the **Parlakimedi rebellion**, "a forgotten rebellion" as he calls it, in the last century, and the share which the Bissoyis took in it, is graphically told by Mr, Rice.

At times of census, Bissoyi has been returned as a title of Doluva, Kalingi, Kurumo, and Sondi.

**Biswalo**.—A title of various Oriya castes.

**Bochchu** (hairs).—An exogamous sept of Odde.

**Boda**.—Recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as a small cultivating class in Ganjam. Boda is the name of a sub-division of the **Gadabas**, who use the fibre of boda luvada (*Ficus glomerata*) in the manufacture of their female garments.

**Boda Dasari** (bald-headed mendicant).—An exogamous sept of Jogi.



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**Boddu** (navel).—An exogamous sept, or sub-division of Idigas and **Asilis**. It is recorded in the Gazetteer of the Bellary district, that "in the middle of the threshold of nearly all the gateways of the ruined fortifications round the Bellary villages will be noticed a roughly cylindrical or conical stone, something like a lingam. This is the **Boddu-rayi**, literally the navel stone, and so the middle stone. Once a year, in May, just before the sowing season begins, a ceremony takes place in connection with it." (See Bariki.)

**Bodo** (big).—A sub-division of Bottada, Mali, Omanaito, Pentia, and other castes. Bodo Nayak is a title among the Gadabas, and Bodo Odiya occurs as a sub-division of Son-di.

**Bogam**.—See Deva-dasi and Sani.

**Bogara**.—Recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as "Canarese brass and copper-smiths: a subdivision of Panchala."

From a note on the Jains of the Bellary district



\* I gather that "there is a class of people called Bogaras in the **Harpanahalli** taluk, and in the town of Harpanahalli itself, side by side with the Jains. They are a thriving class, and trade in brass and copper wares. The Bogaras practice the Jaina religion, have the same gotras, freely worship in Jain temples, and are accepted into Jaina society. Evidently they are a sub-division of the Jains, though now excluded from inter-marriage."

\* Madras Mail, 1905.

It is said that "arrangements are now being made (through the Jaina Bhattacharya at Kolhapur) to enable Bogaras to intermarry with the Jains."

**Bogarlu.**—Occurs as the name of a class of agricultural labourers in the Vizagapatam Agency, who are probably workers in metal who have taken to agriculture.

**Boggula** (charcoal).—An exogamous sept of





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Boya and Devanga.

**Bohora.**—The Bohoras or Boras are "Musalman converts from the Bombay side. They are traders. In Madras they have their own high priest and their own mosque (in Georgetown). It is said that, when one of them dies, the high priest writes a note to the archangels Michael, Israel and Gabriel, asking them to take care of him in Paradise, and that the note is placed in the coffin."

"They consider themselves as a superior class, and, if a member of another section enters their mosque, **they clean the spot occupied** by him during his prayers. They take part in certain Hindu festivals, *e.g.* Dipavali, or feast of lights, at which crackers are let off.

**Boidyo.**—Recorded under the name Boyidyo, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as "literally a physician : a sub-caste of Pandito."

There is said to be no difference between



Panditos and Boidyos. In Ganjam they are known by the former, elsewhere by the latter name.

**Boipari.**—A synonym of Lambadi. (See Bepari.)

**Boishnobo.**—The Boishnobos have been defined as a class of Oriya religious mendicants and priests to Sudras. The name means worshippers of Bishnu or Vishnu. Most of them are followers of Chaitanya, **the great Bengali reformer.**

**Boksha.**—Boksha or Boksham (treasury) is the name of a sub-division of Gollas, indicating their employment as treasury servants in guarding and carrying treasure. In some places, those who are employed in packing and lifting bags of money in district treasuries are still called Gollas, though they may belong to some other caste.

In the Census Report, 1901, **Bokkisha Vadugar** (treasury northerner) was returned as



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a Tamil synonym for Golla.

**Bolasi.**—The Bolasis are a caste of Oriya cultivators, who are largely found in the Gumsur taluk of Ganjam. Many of them serve as paiks or peons. The original name of the caste is said to have been **Thadia**, which has been changed in favour of **Bolasi** (Bayalisi, forty-two) in reference to the caste being one of the recognized forty-two Oriya Sudra castes. It is also suggested that the name is derived from bola (anklets), as the women wear heavy brass anklets. Their ceremonial rites connected with marriage, death, etc., are similar to those of the Doluvas, Gaudos, Badhoyis, and other castes.

Marriage is infant, and, if a girl does not secure a husband before she reaches maturity, she goes through a form of marriage with an arrow or a grinding stone. The Bolasis are Vaishnavites, and observe the Paramaribo or Chaitanya form thereof. The caste titles are Podhano, Nayako, Daso, Mahanti, Patro, Sahu, Jenna, and Konhoro.





Gudiyas who are engaged in agriculture are sometimes known as **Bolasi Gudiyas**.

**Bolodia**.—The name of a section of **Tellis**, who use pack-bullocks (bolodo, an ox) for carrying grain about the country. Some Gaudos, at times of census, have also returned Bolodia as their sub-division.

**Bombadai** (a fish).—A gotra of Medara. The equivalent **Bomidi** occurs as an exogamous sept of Mala. Members of the Vamma gotra of the Janappans abstain from eating this fish, because, when some of their ancestors went to fetch water in a marriage pot, they found a number of this fish in the water collected in the pot.

**Bomma** (a doll).—An exogamous sept of Padma Sale. The equivalent Bommala occurs as an exogamous sept of Mala. The **Bommalatavallu** are said to exhibit\* shows in the Vizagapatam district.

\* Manual of the Vizagapatam district.



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**Bommali.**—A sub-division of the **Koronos** of Ganjam.

**Bonda.**—A sub-division of Poroja.

**Bondia.**—A small class, inhabiting Ganjam. The name is said to be derived from **bondono**, meaning praise, as the Bondias are those who praise and flatter Rajas.

**Bondili.**—In the Madras Census Report, 1891, the Bondilis are "said to derive their name from Bundelkund. They claim to be Rajputs, but appear to have degenerated. The Sivaites of this sect are said to bury their dead, while the Vishnavaites burn. In the Kadri taluk of Cuddapah all are said to bury. The custom in this respect appears to differ in different localities. Besides Siva and Vishnu worship, three of the eight authorities who give particulars of this section agree that they worship village deities as well. All state that remarriage of widows is not permitted. They are



generally cultivators, peons, or the body-guards of Zemindars."

The Bondilis of the North Arcot district are described by Mr. H. A. Stuart\* as being "foreigners from Bundelkund, from which fact their name originates, and of various Vaisya and Sudra castes ; the former having the termination Lala to their names, and the latter that of Ram.

\* Manual of the North Arcot district

“Many of the **Sudra Bondilis**, however, improperly take the title Singh, and say they are Kshatriyas, that is, Rajputs. The Vaisya Bondilis are few in number, and only found in Vellore, Chittoor and Arni, where they are usually money-lenders. The Sudras are mostly sepoy, constables, or revenue peons. Some say that they are not even Sudras, but the descendants of Rajputs by women of the country, and probably many of them are such. All are very particular with respect to eating with another





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professed Bondili, and [refuse to do so unless they are quite certain that he is of their class.](#)

“In their marriage customs they resemble the Rajputs.”

I am informed that one section of the Bondilis is named **Toli**, in reference to their being workers in leather. There is, at Venkatagiri, a street called Toli mitta, or Toli quarters, and, in former days, the inhabitants thereof were not allowed to enter the temples.

In the Census Report, 1901, Guvalo, or traders from Sambalpur, is returned as a sub-caste of Bondili.

**Boniya.**—The Oriya name for Baniya (trader). **Boniya Korono** appears\* as the name for traders and shopkeepers in Ganjani.

\* Manual of the Ganjam district.

**Bonka.**—Recorded, in the Vizagapatam Manual, as cultivators in the Jeypore hills, and, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as a small



Oriya caste of hill cultivators, which has three sub-divisions, Bonka, Pata Bonka, and Goru Bonka.

**Bonthuk.**—The Bonthuks or Bonthuk Savaras are scattered about the Kistna and Guntur districts, and lead a nomad life, carrying their small dwelling-huts with them as they shift from place to place. They are called **Bonthuk Savaras** to distinguish them from the **Pothra** (stone) **Savaras**, who dwell further north.

By Telugu people they are called Chenchu or **Bontha** Chenchu, though they have no connection with the Chenchus who inhabit the hills in Kurnool, and other parts of the Telugu country. The Bonthuks, however, like the Chenchus, claim **Ahobila Narasimha** as their tribal deity.

The Bonthuks speak the Oriya language, and they have a Mongoloid type of features, such as are possessed by the Savaras of Ganjam and Vizagapatam. Their house-names, or **intiperalu**, however are Telugu.



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These constitute exogamous septs, and seem to be as follows :—Pasupuretti, Simhadri (the god at Simhachalam near Vizagapatam), Koneti, Dasapatri, Gedala (buffaloes), Kudumala (cakes), Akula (leaves), Sunkara, and Tota (garden).

At marriages, individuals of the Pasupuretti sept officiate as priests, and members of the Koneti sept as drummers and musicians. Men belonging to the Gedalu sept are considered as equivalent to shepherds. The Bonthuks have a very interesting way of naming their children. If a child is born when an official or person of some distinction happens to be near their encampment, it is named after him. Thus such names as Collector, Tahsildar, Kolnol (Colonel), Governor, Innes, Superintendent, and Acharlu (after one Sukracharlu) are met with.

Sometimes children are named after a town or village, either because they were born there, or in the performance of a vow to some place of pilgrimage. In this way, such names as





Hyderabad, Channapatam (Madras), Bandar (Masulipatam), Nellore, and Tirupati arise. A boy was named Tuyya (parrot), because a parrot was brought into the settlement at the time of his birth. Another child was called Beni because, at its birth, a bamboo flute (**beni**) was played.

Every settlement is said to have a headman, called **Bichadi**, who, in consultation with several elders of the tribe, settles disputes and various affairs affecting the community. If an individual has been fined, and does not accept the punishment, he may appeal to another Bichadi, who may enhance the fine.

Sometimes those who do not agree to abide by the decision of the Bichadi have to undergo a trial by ordeal, by taking out an areca nut from a pot of boiling cow-dung water. The dimensions of the pot, in height and breadth, should not exceed the span of the hand, and the height of the cow-dung water in the pot should be that of the middle finger from the base to the tip. If, in



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removing the nut from the pot, the hand is injured, **the guilt of the individual is proved.**

Before the trial by ordeal, a sum of ten rupees is deposited by both complainant and accused with the Bichadi, and the person under trial may not live in his dwelling-hut. He lives in a grove or in the forest, watched by two members of the Pasupuretti sept.

The Bonthuks are engaged in collecting bamboos, and selling them after straightening them by heating them in the fire. Before the bamboos are placed in carts, for conveyance to the settlement, a goat and fowls are sacrificed to Satyamma, Dodlamma, Muthyalamma, and Pothuraju, who are represented by stones.

Girls are married before puberty, and, if a girl happens to be mated only after she has reached maturity, there is no marriage ceremonial. The marriage rites last over five days, on the first of which a brass vessel, with a thread tied round its neck, and containing turmeric water and the **oyila tokka** or tonko



(bride's money), is carried in procession to the bride's hut on the head of a married girl belonging to a sept other than those of the contracting couple. She has on her head a hood decorated with little bells, and the vessel is supported on a cloth pad. When the hut is reached, the bride's money is handed over to the Bichadi, and the turmeric water is poured on the ground.

The bride's money is divided between her parents and maternal uncle, the Bichadi, and the caste men. A pig is purchased, and carried by two men on a pole to the scene of the marriage. The caste people, and the married girl carrying a brass vessel, go round the animal, to the accompaniment of music. The girl, as she goes round, pours water from the vessel on the ground. A thread is tied round the neck of the pig, which is taken to the bridegroom's hut, and cut up into two portions, for the parties of the bridegroom and bride, of which the former is cooked and eaten on the same day.





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At the homes of the bride and bridegroom, a pandal (booth) and dais are erected. The materials for the former are brought by seven women, and for the latter by nine men. The pandal is usually decorated with mango and *Eugenia Arnottiana* leaves.

After supper, some relations of the contracting couple go to an open space, where the Bichadi, who has by him two pots and two **bashingams** (chaplets) of **arka** (*Calotropis gigantea*) flowers, is seated with a few men. The fathers of the bride and bridegroom ask the Bichadi to give them the bashingams, and this he does after receiving an assurance that the wedding will not be attended by quarrelling.

The bride and bridegroom take their seats on the dais at the home of the latter, and the officiating priest ties the bashingams on their foreheads. Nine men and seven women stand near the dais, and a thread is passed round them seven times. This thread is cut up by the priest, and used for the kankanams (wrist



threads) of the bride and bridegroom. These are removed, at the close of the marriage festivities, on the fifth day.

When a girl attains maturity, she is under pollution for nine days, at the conclusion of which the Bichadi receives a small present of money from her parents. Her husband, and his agnates (people of his sept) also have to observe pollution, and, on the ninth day, the cooking pots which they have used are thrown away, and they proceed to the Bichadi, to whom they make a present of money, as they have probably broken the tribal rule that smoking is forbidden when under pollution.

On the ninth day, the girl and her husband throw water over each other, and the marriage is consummated. The dead are usually buried, lying on the left side.

On the second day, food is offered to crows and **Brahmani** kites. On the eleventh day, a mat is spread on the floor of the hut, and covered with a clean sheet, on which balls of food are



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placed. The dead person is invoked by name, as the various people deposit the food offering. The food is finally put into a winnowing basket, and taken to the bank of a tank (pond).

A small hut is made there, and the food is placed therein on two leaves, one of which represents the **Yama Dutas** (servants of the god of death), the other the deceased.

**Boori** (cake).—An exogamous sept of Mala.

**Bosantiya**.—The Bosantiyas are summed up, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as "Oriya cultivators found in the northern taluks of Ganjam. They are said by some to have been originally dyers."

I am informed that the caste name has reference to the fact that the occupation thereof was the collection of the fruits of *Mallotus philippinensis*, and trade in the dye (*bosonto gundi*) obtained therefrom. The dye, commonly known as kamela, or kamala, is the powdery substance obtained as a glandular pubescence





from the exterior of the fruits.

The following note on the dye was published in the Indian Forester, 1892. "Among the many rich natural products of Ganjam, probably the most esteemed in commerce is the red **kamela** dye, the valuable product of the *Mallotus philippinensis*. This tree, with its lovely scarlet berries and vivid emerald green foliage, is a marked feature of forest scenery in Ganjam. The berries are coated with a beautiful red powder, which constitutes the dye. This powder is collected by being brushed off into baskets made for the purpose, but the method of collection is reckless and wasteful in the extreme, the trees being often felled in order to reach the berries more easily. The industry is a monopoly of the Hill Khonds, who, however, turn it to little advantage. **They are ignorant of the great commercial value of the dye**, and part with the powder to the low-country dealers settled among them for a few measures of rice or a yard or two of cloth.



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“The industry is capable of great development, and a large fortune awaits the firm or individual with sufficient enterprise to enter into rivalry with the low-country native dealers settled among the Khonds, who at present enjoy a monopoly of the trade. It is notorious that these men are accumulating vast profits in respect of this dye. The tree is cultivated largely by the Khonds in their forest villages.”

The Bosantiyas seem to have no subdivisions, but exogamous gotras, e.g., **nagasira** (cobra) and **kochimo** (tortoise) exist among them. Socially they are on a par with the **Bhondaris**, and above **Pachchilia Gaudos** and **Samantiyas**. They have a headman called **Bissoyi**, who is assisted by a Bhollobaya, and they have further a caste messenger called **Jati Naiko**. The caste titles are Bissoyi and Nahako.

Most of the Bosantiyas are Saivites, but a few follow the **Paramartho** form of Vaishnavism. They also worship various **Takuranis** (village



deities), such as **Kotaru** and **Chondi**.

In the Vizagapatam Manual (1869), Bosuntea is described as a caste of Paiks or fighting men in the Vizagapatam district (Jeypore).

**Bottada.**—The Bottadas are, Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,\* "a Class of Uriya cultivators and labourers, speaking **Muria** or Lucia, otherwise known as Basturia, a dialect of Uriya. Mr. Taylor says the caste is the same as Muria, which is shown separately in the tables, and in Mr. H. G. Turner's notes in the Census Report of 1871. But, whether identical or distinct, it seems clear that both are sub-divisions of the great Gond tribe."

For the following note, I am indebted to Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao. There is a current tradition that the caste originally dwelt at Barthagada, and emigrated to Vizagapatam long ago. It is vaguely mentioned that Barthagada was situated towards and beyond Bastar, near which place there are still to be found people of this caste, with whom those living in the





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Vizagapatam Agency intermarry. The caste is divided into three endogamous divisions, viz. :

(i) Bodo, or genuine Bottadas ;

(2) Madhya, descendants of Bottada men and non-Bottada women;

(3) Sanno, descendants of Madhya men and non-Madhya women. The Bodos will not interdine with the other two sections, but males of these will eat with Bodos.

The following notes refer to the Bodo section, in which various exogamous septs, or bamsa, exist, of which the following are examples:

Kochchimo, tortoise.

Bhag, tiger.

Goyi, lizard ( Varaniis).

Nag, cobra.

Kukkuro, dog.

Makado, monkey.

Cheli, goat.



Girls are married either before or after puberty. A man can claim his paternal aunt's daughter in marriage. When a marriage is under contemplation, the prospective bridegroom's parents take **maddho** (liquor) and **chada** (beaten rice) to the girl's house, where they are accepted or refused, according as her parents agree to, or disapprove of the match. After a stated period, further presents of liquor, rice, black gram, dhal, salt, chillies, and jaggery (crude sugar) are brought, and betel leaves and areca nuts given in exchange. Two days later the girl's parents pay a return visit to those of the young man. After another interval, the marriage takes place. Nine days before its celebration, paddy (unhusked rice) and Rs. 2 are taken to the bride's house as jholla tonka, and a feast is held.

At the bridegroom's house, a pandal, made of nine sorghi or sal (*Shorea robusta*) posts, is erected, with a pot of turmeric water tied to the central post. The bride is conducted thither. At



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the marriage rites the Desari officiates. The ends of the cloths of the contracting couple are tied together, and their little fingers are linked together, while they go, with pieces of turmeric and rice in their hands, seven times round the pandal. The sacred fire, or homam, is raised, and into it seven or nine different kinds of wood, ghi (clarified butter), milk, rice and jaggery are thrown. Turmeric-rice dots are put on the foreheads of the bride and bridegroom by the Desari, parents, and relations. They are anointed with castor-oil, and bathed with the water contained in the pot tied to the post. New cloths are presented to them, and a caste feast is held.

Widow remarriage is permitted, and a younger brother often marries the widow of his elder brother. If, however, she marries any one else, her new husband has to pay rand tonka, consisting of liquor, a sheep or goat, and rice, as a fine to the caste, or he may compound for payment of five rupees. Divorce is permitted,





and, if a man divorces his wife, he usually gives her some paddy, a new cloth, and a rupee. If the woman divorces herself from her husband, and contracts an alliance with another man, the latter has to pay a fine of twenty rupees to the first husband, a portion of which is spent on a feast, at which the two husbands and the woman are present.

The dead are burned, and death pollution is observed for ten days, during which no agricultural work is done, and no food is cooked in the **bamsa** of the deceased, which is fed by some related bamsa. On the day following cremation, a new pot with water, and some sand are carried to the spot where the corpse was burnt. A bed of sand is made, in which a banyan (*Ficus bengalensis*) or pipal (*Ficus religiosa*) is planted. A hole is made in the pot, and the plant watered. On the tenth day, on which a bath is taken, some fried rice and a new pot are carried to the burning-ground, and left there.



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The Bottadas have the reputation of being the best cultivators in the Jeypore Agency, and they take a high position in social rank. Many of them wear the sacred thread, at the time of marriage and subsequently, and it is said that the right to wear it was acquired by purchase from former Rajas of Jeypore.

**Bottu Kattoru** (those who tie the bottu).—A subdivision of Kappiliyans, who are Canarese cultivators settled in the Tamil district of Madura. The bottu (marriage badge) is the equivalent of the Tamil tali.

**Bovi**.—The name of the palanquin-bearing section of the Mogers of South Canara. Some Besthas from Mysore, who have settled in this district, are also called Bovi, which is a form of Boyi (bearer).

**Boya** (see Bedar).—Boya has also been recorded\* as a sub-division of Mala, a name for **Ekari**.

\* Manual of the North Arcot district.



**Boyan.**—A title of Odde.

**Boyi** (see Bestha).—It is also the title of one of the chief men among the Savaras.

**Brahman.**—The Brahmans of Southern India are divided into a number of sections, differing in language, manners and customs. As regards their origin, the current belief is that they sprang from the mouth of Brahma. In support thereof, the following verse from the **Purusha Suktha** (hymn of the primaeval male) of the Rig Veda is quoted :—

From the face of **Prajapathi** (Viratpurusha) came the Brahmans; from the arms arose the **Kshatriyas** ; from the thighs sprang the **Vaisyas** ; and from the feet the **Sudras**.

Mention of the fourfold division of the Hindu castes is also made in other Vedas, and in **Ithihasas** and **Puranas**.

The Brahmans fall into three groups, following the three Vedas or Sakas, Rig, Yajus, and Samam. This threefold division is,





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however, recognised only for ceremonial purposes. For marriage and social purposes, the divisions based on language and locality are practically more operative.

In the matter of the more important religious rites, the Brahmans of Southern India, as elsewhere, closely follow their own Vedas. Every Brahman belongs to one or other of the numerous gotras mentioned in **Pravara** and **Gotra Kandams**. All the religious rites are performed according to the **Grihya Sutras** (ritual books) pertaining to their Saka or Veda. Of these, there are eight kinds now in vogue, viz. :

1. Asvalayana: Sutra of the Rig Veda.
2. Apasthamba : Sutras of the black Yajus.
3. Bharadwaja: Sutras of the black Yajus.
4. Bhodayana : Sutras of the black Yajus.
5. Sathyashada: Sutras of the black Yajus.
6. Vaikkanasa: Sutras of the black Yajus.
7. Kathyayana: Sutra of the white Yajus.



## 8. Drahyayana: Sutra of Sama Veda.

All Brahmans claim descent from one or more of the following seven Rishis :—**Atri, Bhrigu, Kutsa, Vashista, Gautama, Kasyapa, Angiras.**

According to some, the Rishis are Agasthya, Angiras, Atri, Bhrigu, Kasyapa, Vashista, and Gautama. Under these Rishis are included eighteen ganams, and under each ganam there are a number of gotras, amounting in all to about 230. Every Brahman is expected to salute his superiors by repeating the **Abhivadhanam** (salutation) which contains his lineage.

As an example, the following may be given :—" I, Krishna by name, of Srivathsa gotra, with the pravara (lineage) of the five Rishis, Bhargava, Chyavana, Apnuvana, Aruva, and Jamadagni, following the Apasthamba sutra of the Yajus Saka, am now saluting you."

Daily, at the close of the Sandhya prayers, this Abhivadhanam formula should be repeated by every Brahman. Taking the Brahmans as a



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whole, it is customary to group them in two main divisions, the Pancha Dravidas and Pancha Gaudas.

The Pancha Dravidas are pure vegetarians, whereas the Pancha Gaudas need not abstain from meat and fish, though some, who live amidst the Pancha Dravidas, do so. Other differences will be noted in connection with Oriya Brahmans, who belong to the Pancha Gauda section. In South India, all Brahmans, except those who speak the Oriya and Konkani languages, are Pancha Dravidas, who are divided into five sections, viz. :

1. Tamil, or Dravida proper.
2. Telugu or Andhra.
3. Canarese, or Carnataka.
4. Marathi or Desastha.
5. Guzarati.

The Tulu-speaking Shivalli Brahmans are included among the Carnatakas ; the Pattar and Nambutiri Brahmans (see Nambutiri) among the





Dravidas proper.

From a religious point of view, the Brahmans are either Saivites or Vaishnavites. The Saivites are either Saivites proper, or **Smarthas**. The Smarthas believe that the soul of man is only a portion of the infinite spirit (atman), and that it is capable of becoming absorbed into the atman. They recognise the Trimurtis, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva as separate gods, but only as equal manifestations of the supreme spirit, and that, in the end, these are to be absorbed into the infinite spirit, and so disappear.

Saivas, on the other hand, do not recognise the Trimurtis, and believe only in one god, Siva, who is self-existent, and not liable to lose his personality. Of Vaishnavites there are three kinds, viz., those who are the followers of Chaitanya, Ramanuja, and Madhvacharya.

Like the Smarthas, the Vaishnavites recognise Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, but Vishnu is supposed to be the chief god, to whom the others are subordinate.



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"Vaishnavas," Monier Williams writes\*, "are believers in the one personal god Vishnu, not only as the preserver, but as above every other god, including Siva. It should be noted, too, that both Saivites and Vaishnavas agree in attributing an essential form of qualities to the Supreme Being. Their one god, in fact, exists in an eternal body, which is antecedent to his earthly incarnations, and survives all such incarnations."

\* Religious Thought and Life in India

He adds that "it cannot be doubted that one great conservative element of Hinduism is the many sidedness of Vaishnavism. For Vaishnavism is, like Buddhism, the most tolerant of systems. It is always ready to accommodate itself to other creeds, and delights in appropriating to itself the religious idea of all the nations of the world. It admits of every form of internal development. It has no organised hierarchy under one supreme head,



but it may have any number of separate associations under separate leaders, who are ever banding themselves together for the extension of spiritual supremacy over ever increasing masses of population."

The Oriya Brahmans, who follow the creed of Chaitanya, are called **Paramarthos**, and are confined to the Ganjam district. There is no objection to intermarriage between Smartha and Paramaribo Oriya Brahmans. Sri Vaishnavas (who put on the namam as a sectarian mark) and Madhvas are exclusive as regards intermarriage, but the Madhvas have no objection to taking meals with, and at the houses of Smarthas, whereas Sri Vaishnavas object to doing so.

According to the Sutras, a Brahman has to go through the following samskaras (rites) :

1. Garbhadana.
2. Pumsavanam.
3. Simantam.





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4- Jatakarmam.

5- Namakaranam.

6. Annaprasanam.

7- Chaulam.

8. Upanayanam.

9- Vivaham.

These rites are supposed to purify the body and spirit from the taint transmitted through the womb of the mother, but all of them are not at the present day performed at the proper time, and in regular order.

The **Garbhadhana**, or impregnation ceremony, should, according to the Grihya Sutras, be performed on the fourth day of the marriage ceremonies. But, as the bride is a young girl, it is omitted, or Vedic texts are repeated. The Garbhadhana ceremony is performed, after the girl has attained puberty.

At the time of consummation or **Ritu Santhi**, the following verse is repeated : — *"Let all pervading Vishnu prepare her womb ; let the*



*Creator shape its forms ; let Prajapathi be the impregnator ; let the Creator give the embryo."*

**Pumsavanam** and **Simantam** are two ceremonies, which are performed together during the seventh or ninth month of the first pregnancy, though, according to the Grihya Sutras, the former should be performed in the third month. At the Pumsavanam, or male producing ceremony, the pregnant woman fasts, and her husband squeezes into her right nostril a little juice from the fruit and twig of the **alam** tree (*Ficus bengalensis*), saying "Thou art a male child."

The twig selected should be one pointing, east or north; with two fruits looking like testicles. The twig is placed on a grinding-stone, and a girl, who has not attained puberty, is asked to pound it. The pulp is wrapped in a new silk cloth, and squeezed to express the juice. On the conclusion of the Pumsavanam, the Simantam, or parting the pregnant woman's hair, is gone through.



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After oblations in the sacred fire (homam), the woman's husband takes a porcupine quill, to which three blades of dharbha grass, and a twig with fruits of the **aththi** tree (*Ficus glomerata*) are attached, and passes it over the woman's head from before backwards, parting the hair.

The **Jatakarmam**, **Namakaranam**, **Annaprasanam**, and **Chaulam** rites are ordinarily celebrated, one after the other, on the Upanayanam day. Jatakarmam consists in smearing some ghi (clarified butter) and honey on the tongue of the baby, and repeating the following verses from the Rig Veda :—"Oh ! long lived one, mayst thou live a hundred years in this world, protected by the gods. Become firm as a rock, firm as an axe, pure as gold. Thou art the Veda called a son ; live thou a hundred years. May Indra bestow on thee his best treasures. May Savitri, may Sarasvati, may the Asvins grant thee wisdom."

At the **Namakaranam**, or naming ceremony, the parents of the child pronounce its name





close to its ear, and repeat the Vedic prayer to Indra and Agni "May Indra give you lustre, and Indra semen, wisdom, and children."

The **Annaprasanam**, or food-giving ceremony, should be performed during the sixth month after birth. A little solid food is put into the child's mouth, and the following Vedic verses are repeated :—"Agni who lives on plants, Soma who lives on soma juice, Brahmans who live on the Vedas, and Devatas who live on **amartam** (ambrosia), may they bless you. As the earth gives food to plants and water, so I give you this food. May these waters and plants give you prosperity and health."

At the **Chaulam**, or tonsure ceremony, the child is seated in his mother's lap. The father, taking a few blades of dharbha grass in his hand, sprinkles water over the child's head. Seven times he inserts blades of dharbha in the hair of the head (three blades each time), saying "Oh ! divine grass, protect him."

He then cuts off the tips of the blades, and



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throws them away. The father is expected, according to the Grihya Sutras, to shave or cut the child's hair. At the present day, however, the barber is called in, and shaves the head, leaving one lock or more according to local custom.

The **Upanayana**, or leading a boy to his guru or spiritual teacher, is essentially a ceremony of initiation. From an orthodox point of view, this ceremony should be performed before the age of eight years, but in practice it is deferred even up to the age of seventeen. It usually commences with the arrangement of seed-pans containing nine kinds of grain, and tying a thread or **pratisaram** on the boy's wrist.

After this, the **Abyudayam**, or invocation of ancestors, is gone through. The boy sits in front of the sacred fire, and his father, or some other person, sits by his side, to help him in the ceremonial and act the part of guru. He places over the boy's head blades of dharbha grass so that the tips are towards the east, south, west,



and north. The tips are cut off, and the following Vedic verses are repeated :—

" Please permit me to shave the head of this boy with the knife used by the sun for shaving Soma. He is to be shaved, because it will bring him long life and old age. May the boy become great, and not die a premature death. May he outshine all in glory."

The boy is then shaved by a barber, and more Vedic verses are repeated, which run as follows : —

“You are shaving with a sharp razor, so that this shaving may enable him to live long. **Brihaspathi**, Surya, and Agni shaved the hair of the head of **Varuna**, and placed the hairs in the middle regions of the sky, earth, and in **swarga**. I shall place the hairs removed by me at the foot of the **audambara** tree (*Ficus glomerata*), or in the clumps of dharbha grass."

The boy then bathes, and comes near the sacred fire. After ghi has been poured thereon,





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a bundle of **palasa** (*Butea frondosa*) sticks is given to him, and he puts it on the fire after repeating certain Vedic **riks**. A grinding-stone is placed on one side of the fire, and the boy treads on it, while the following verse is repeated:—

"Tread on this stone, and may you be as firm as it is. May you subdue thy enemies."

A new cloth is given to him., which he puts on. The following verses are then repeated :—" Oh ! cloth, Revathi and others have spun, woven, spread out, and put skirts on both sides of you. May these goddesses clothe the boy with long life. Blessed with life, put on this cloth. Dress the boy with this cloth. By wearing it, let him attain a hundred years of age. May his life be extended. Such a garment as this was given to Soma by **Brihaspathi** to wear. Mayst thou reach old age. Put on this cloth. Be a protector to all people. May you live a hundred years with full vigour. May you have plenty of wealth."

After the boy has put on the cloth, the



following is repeated:—"You have put on this cloth for the sake of blessing. You have become the protector of your friends. Live a hundred years. A noble man, blessed with life, mayst thou obtain wealth."

A girdle (**minji**) spun from grass is wound thrice round the boy's body, and tied with a knot opposite the navel, or to the left of it. The following verses are repeated:—

"This blessed girdle, the friend of the gods, has come to us to remove our sins, to purify and protect us, bring strength to us by the power of exhalation and inhalation. Protect, Oh ! girdle, our wealth and meditation. Destroy our enemies, and guard us on all the four sides."

A small piece of deer-skin is next tied on to the sacred thread, which has been put on the boy soon after the shaving rite. The following verses are repeated :—

"Oh ! skin which is full of lustre because **Mitra** sees you, full of glory and one that is not fit for



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wicked people, I am now putting you on. May **Aditi** tuck up thy garment. Thou mayst read Vedas, and grow wise. Thou mayst not forget what you have read. Mayst thou become holy and glorious."

The boy seats himself next to the guru, and close to the sacred fire, and repeats the following :—

"I have come near the spiritual teacher, my **Acharya**. May the teacher and myself become prosperous. May I also complete my Vedic studies properly, and let me be blessed with a married life after the study."

The guru sprinkles water over the boy three times, and, taking hold of his hand, says:—

"Agni, Soman, Savitha, Sarasvati, Pusha, Aryaman, Amsuhu, Bagadevata, and Mitra have seized thy hand. They have taken you over to them, and you have become friends."

Then he hands over the boy to the gods by repeating :—





"We give you to Agni, Soman, Savitha, Sarasvati, Mrityu, Yaman, Gadhan, Andhakan, Abhaya, Oshadhi, Prithvi, and Vaisvanara. With the permission of Surya, I am allowing you to approach me. Oh ! boy, may you have children full of lustre, and capable of becoming heroes."

The boy then repeats the following :—" I am come to be a student. You that have obtained permission from the Surya, please take me."

The teacher asks, "Who are you? What is your name? The boy gives out his name, and the teacher enquires of him what kind of **Brahmachari** he is. The boy replies that he is a Brahmachari for **Atman**, and repeats the following : —

"Oh ! sun, the lord of all ways, through your grace I am about to begin my studies, which will do good to me."

The teacher and the boy take their seats on dharbha grass, and say :—" Oh ! dharbha, a giver of royal power, a teacher's seat, may I not



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withdraw from thee."

The boy then pours some ghi on to the sacred fire. A cloth is thrown over both the teacher and the boy, and the latter asks the former to recite the Savitri, The following Gayatri is repeated into his ear :—

"Let us meditate on that excellent glory of the divine vivifier. May he illumine our understandings."

The boy touches his own upper lip with his right hand, and says :—" Oh ! Prana, I have become illumined, having heard the Savitri. Protect and guard this wealth that has entered me, the Gayatri or Savitri."

He then takes the **palasa** staff, and the teacher says : — "Up with life. Oh ! sun, this is thy son. I give him in charge to thee."

The boy then worships the sun thus :—" That bright eye created by the gods, which rises in the east, may we see it a hundred autumns ; may we live a hundred autumns ; may we



rejoice a hundred autumns ; may we live a hundred autumns ; may we rejoice a hundred autumns ; may we be glad a hundred autumns ; may we prosper a hundred autumns ; may we speak a hundred autumns ; may we live undecaying a hundred autumns ; and may we lone see the sun."

The ceremonial is brought to a close on the first day by the boy begging rice from his mother and other female relations. A basket, filled with rice, is placed in a pandal (booth), and the boy stands near it, repeating "Please give me alms."

Each woman pours some rice into a tray which he carries, and presents him with some money and betel leaves. The rice is placed in the basket. On the second and third days, the boy puts palasa sticks into the sacred fire, and pours ghi thereon. On the fourth day, the new cloth is given to the teacher.

The wearing of the sacred thread is a sign that the boy has gone through the upanayanam ceremony. It is noted\* by the Rev. A.





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Margoschis that "the son of Brahman parents is not reckoned to be a Brahman (i.e., he may not take part in religious ceremonies) until he has gone through the ceremony of assuming the sacred thread ; and I have heard Brahman boys wearing the thread taunting a boy of Brahman birth, and calling him a Sudra, because he had not yet assumed the holy thread."

\* Christianity and Caste, 1893.

The thread is composed of three threads of cotton secured together in one spot by a sacred knot of peculiar construction, called **Brahma Grandhi**. The knot in the sacred thread worn by Vaishnava Brahmans is called **Vishnu Grandhi**, and that in the thread of Smarthas **Rudra Grandhi**.

In the preparation of the thread, cotton sold in the bazaar may not be used; the bolls ought to be secured direct from the plant. Here and there Brahmans may be seen in villages, removing the cotton from the bolls, and preparing it into



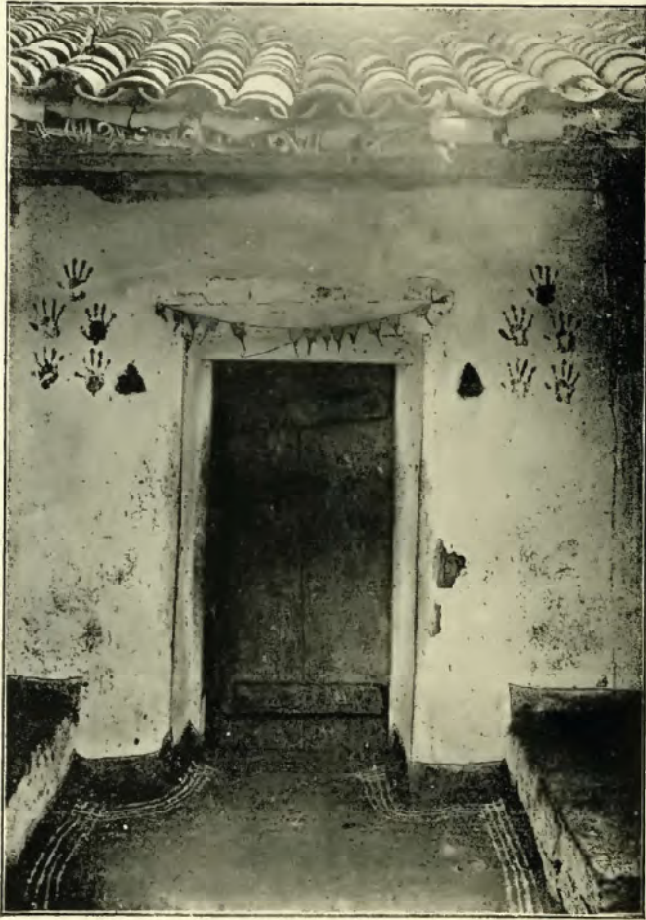
pads for spinning into thread. Those who teach students the Vedas may be seen spinning the thread from these pads. The spinning rod is a thin piece of bamboo stick weighted with a lead or soapstone disc about half an inch in diameter. The thin thread is kept in stock, and twisted into the sacred thread whenever it is required. Three or more people usually take part in the twisting process, during which they chant Vedic verses.

In the **Srutis** and **Sutras**, it is enjoined that the **Yagnopavita** (sacred thread) is to be put on only on occasions of sacrifice. It ought really to be a vestment, and is a symbolical representation thereof. Ordinarily the thread is worn over the left shoulder in the position called **Upavitham**.

In ceremonies connected with the dead, however, it is worn over the right shoulder in the position called **prachinavithi**. At the time of worshipping **Rishis** and **Ganas**, the thread should be over both shoulders and round the neck in the position called **nivithi**.



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BRAHMAN HOUSE WITH MARKS OF HAND TO WARD OFF THE EVIL EYE.

The grass girdle and deer-skin worn by a youth at the Upanayanam ceremony are removed on the fifth day, or, among the orthodox, kept on until the first Upakarmam day.

They, and the palasa stick, should be retained by the Brahmachari till the close of his studentship. Nambutiri Brahman lads of eight or nine years old, who have gone through the Upanayanam ceremony, always carry with them the palasa stick, and wear the grass girdle, and, in addition to the sacred thread, a thin strip of deer-skin in length equal to the thread.

Round the waist he wears a narrow strip of cloth (**kaupinam**) passed between the legs. He may cover his breast and abdomen with a cloth thrown over his body. He is thus clad until his marriage, or at least until he has concluded the study of the Vedas.

The marriage rites in vogue at the present





day resemble those of Vedic times in all essential particulars. All sections of Brahmins closely follow the **Grihya Sutras** relating to their **sakha**. The marriage ceremonies commence with the **Nischyathartham** or betrothal ceremony. The bridegroom being seated on a plank amidst a number of Brahmins, Vedic verses are repeated, and, after the bestowal of blessings, the bride's father proclaims that he intends giving his daughter in marriage to the bridegroom, and that he may come for the purpose after the completion of the **Vratam** ceremony.

For this ceremony, the bridegroom, after being shaved, dresses up. Meanwhile, the Brahmins who have been invited assemble. The bridegroom sits on the marriage dais, and, after repeating certain Vedic verses, says :—

"With the permission of all assembled, let me begin the Vratams **Prajapathyam**, **Soumyam**, **Agneyam**, and **Vaiswadevam**, and let me also close them."



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All the Vratams should be performed long before the marriage. In practice, however, this is not done, so the bridegroom performs an expiatory ceremony, to make up for the omission. This consists in offering oblations of ghi, and giving presents of money to a few Brahmans. The bridegroom is helped throughout the Vratam ceremonies by a spiritual teacher or guru, who is usually his father or a near relation. The guru sprinkles water over the bridegroom's body, and tells him to go on with **kandarishi tharpanam** (offerings of water, gingelly, and rice, as an oblation to Rishis).

A small copper or silver vessel is placed on a leaf to the north-east of the sacred fire, and is made to represent **Varuna**. A new cloth is placed round the vessel. The various Vratams mentioned are gone through rapidly, and consist of offerings of ghi through fire to the various Devatas and Pitris.

The **Nandhi Sradh**, or memorial service to ancestors, is then performed. The bridegroom



next dresses up as a married man, and proceeds on a mock pilgrimage to a distant place. This is called **Paradesa Pravesam** (going to a foreign place), or **Kasiyatra** (pilgrimage to Benares). It is a remnant of the **Snathakarma** rite, whereat a Brahmachari, or student, leaves his spiritual teacher's house at the close of his studies, performs a ceremony of ablution, and becomes an initiated householder or **Snathaka**. The bridegroom carries with him an umbrella, a fan, and a bundle containing some rice, cocoanut, and areca-nut. He usually goes eastward. His future father-in-law meets him, and brings him to the house at which the marriage is to be celebrated. As soon as he has arrived there, the bride is brought, dressed up and decorated in finery.

The bridal pair are taken up on the shoulders of their maternal uncles, who dance about for a short time. Whenever they meet, the bride and bridegroom exchange garlands (**malaimaththal**). The couple then sit on a swing within the pandal





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(booth), and songs are sung. A few married women go round them three times, carrying water, a light, fruits, and betel, in a tray.

The pair are conducted into the house, and are seated on the marriage dais. The marriage, or **Vivaham**, is then commenced. A purohit (priest) repeats certain Vedic texts as a blessing, and says : — " Bless this couple of ... . gotras, the son and daughter of .... , grandchildren of .... , now about to be married."

At this stage, the **gotras** of the contracting couple must be pronounced distinctly, so as to ensure that they are not among the prohibited degrees. The bridal couple must belong to different gotras. The bridegroom next says that he is about to commence the worship of **Visvaksena** if he is a Vaishnavite, or **Ganapathi** if he is a Saivite, for the successful termination of the marriage ceremonies.

The **Ankurarpana** (seed-pan) ceremony is then proceeded with. Five earthenware pans are procured, and, after being purified by the



sprinkling of **punyaham** water over them, are arranged in the form of a square. Four of the pans are placed at the four cardinal points, east, west, north, and south, and the remaining pot is set down in the centre of the square. The pan to the east represents Indra, the one to the west Varuna, the one to the south Yama, and the one to the north Soman. While water is being sprinkled over the pans, the following synonyms for each of these gods are repeated :

Indra—Sathakruthu, Vajranam, Sachipathi.

Yama—Vaivaswata, Pithrupathi, Dharmaraja,

Varuna—Prachethas, Apampathi, Swarupinam.

Soman—Indum, Nisakaram, Oshadisam.

Nine kinds of grains soaked in water are placed in the seed-pans. These grains are *Dolichos Lablab* (two varieties), *Phascolus Mungo* (two varieties), *Oryza sativa*, *Cicer Arietinum*, *Cajanus indicus*, *Eleusine Coracana*, and *Vigna Catiang*. The tying of the wrist-thread (**pratisaram**) is next proceeded with. Two cotton



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threads are laid on a vessel representing **Varuna**.

After the recitation of Vedic verses, the bridegroom takes one of the threads, and, dipping it in turmeric paste, holds it with his left thumb, smears some of the paste on it with his right thumb and forefinger, and ties it on the left wrist of the bride. The purohit ties the other thread on the right wrist of the bridegroom, who, facing the assembly, says "I am going to take the bride."

He then recites the following Vedic verse:—"Go to my future father-in-law with due precautions, and mingle with the members of his family. This marriage is sure to be pleasing to Indra, because he gets oblations of food, etc., after the marriage. May your path be smooth and free from thorns. May Surya and Bhaga promote our **dhampathyam** (companionship)."

The purohit again proclaims the marriage, and the gotras and names of three generations are repeated. Those assembled then bless the





couple. The bride's father says that he is prepared to give his daughter in marriage to the bridegroom, who states that he accepts her. The father of the bride washes the feet of the bridegroom placed on a tray with milk and water. The bridegroom then washes the feet of the bride's father. The bride sits in her father's lap, and her mother stands at her side.

The father, repeating the names of the bridegroom's ancestors for three generations, says that he is giving his daughter to him. He places the hand of the bride on that of the bridegroom, and both he and the bride's mother pour water over the united hands of the contracting couple.

The following **sloka** is repeated :—"I am giving you a virgin decorated with jewels, to enable me to obtain religious merit."

The bridegroom takes the bride by the hand, and both take their seats in front of the sacred fire. This part of the ceremonial is called **dhare** (pouring of water). Much importance is attached



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to it by Tulu Brahmans.

Among Non-Brahman castes in South Canara, it forms the binding portion of the marriage ceremony. After the pouring of ghi as an oblation, the bridegroom throws down a few twigs of dharbha grass, and repeats the formula :—"Oh ! dharbha, thou art capable of giving royal powers, and the teacher's seat. May I not be separated from thee."

Then the bride's father, giving a vessel of water, says "Here is **Arghya** water."

The bridegroom receives it with the formula :—" May this water destroy my enemies. May brilliancy, energy, strength, life, renown, glory, splendour, and power dwell in me."

Once again the bride's father washes the feet of the bridegroom, who salutes his father-in-law, saying "Oh ! water, unite me with fame, splendour, and milk. Make me beloved by all creatures, the lord of cattle. May fame, heroism, and energy dwell in me."



The bride's father pours some water from a vessel over the hand of the bridegroom, who says "To the ocean I send you, the imperishable waters ; go back to your source. May I not suffer loss in my offspring. May my sap not be shed."

A mixture of honey, plantain fruit, and ghi, is given to the bridegroom by the bride's father with the words "**Ayam Madhuparko**" (honey mixture). Receiving it, the bridegroom mutters the following :—" What is the honeyed, highest form of honey which consists in the enjoyment of food ; by that honeyed highest form of honey, may I become highest, honeyed, an enjoyer of food."

He partakes three times of the mixture, and says :—"I eat thee for the sake of brilliancy, luck, glory, power, and the enjoyment of food."

Then the bride's father gives a cocoanut to the bridegroom, saying "**Gauhu**" (cow). The bridegroom receives it with the words "Oh ! cow, destroy my sin, and that of my father-in-law."





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According to the Grihya Sutras, a cow should be presented to the bridegroom, to be cooked or preserved.

Next a plantain fruit is given to the bridegroom, who, after eating a small portion of it, hands it to the bride. The bride sits on a heap or bundle of paddy (unhusked rice), and the bridegroom says "Oh ! **Varuna**, bless her with wealth. May there be no ill-feeling between herself, her brothers and sisters. Oh ! Brihaspathi, bless her that she may not lose her husband. Oh ! Indra, bless her to be fertile. Oh ! Savitha, bless her that she may be happy in all respects. Oh ! girl, be gentle-eyed and friendly to me. Let your look be of such a nature as not to kill your husband. Be kind to me, and to my brothers.\* May you shine with lustre, and be of good repute. Live long, and bear living children."

\* In the Vedic verse the word used for my brothers literally means your husbands.

The pair are then seated, and the



bridegroom, taking a blade of dharbha grass, passes it between the eyebrows of the bride, and throws it behind her, saying "With this dharbha grass I remove the evil influence of any bad mark thou mayst possess, which is likely to cause widowhood." [*Certain marks or curls (**suli**) forebode prosperity, and others misery to a family into which a girl enters by marriage. And, when a wealthy Hindu meditates purchasing a horse, he looks to the presence or absence of certain marks on particular parts of the body, and thereby forms a judgment of the temper and qualities of the animal.*]

The bridegroom then repeats the following :—  
" Now they ought to rejoice, and not cry. They have arranged our union to bring happiness to both of us. In view of the happiness we are to enjoy hereafter, they should be glad. This is a fitting occasion for rejoicing."

Four Brahmans next bring water, and the bridegroom receives it, saying :—"May the evil qualities of this water disappear ; may it



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increase. Let the Brahmans bring water for the bath, and may it bring long life and children to her."

A bundle of paddy, or a basket filled therewith, is brought to the pandal. The bride sits on the paddy, and a ring of dharbha grass is placed on her head. The bridegroom repeats the formula "Blessed by the Surya, sit round the sacred fire, and look at the dharbha ring, my mother-in-law and brother-in-law."

A yoke is then brought, one end of which is placed on the head of the bride above the ring, and the following formula is repeated:—"Oh! Indra, cleanse and purify this girl, just as you did in the case of **Abhala**, by pouring water through three holes before marrying her."

**Abhala** was an ugly woman, who wished to marry Indra. To attain this end, she did penance for a long time, and, meeting Indra, requested him to fulfil her desire. Indra made her his wife, after transforming her into a beautiful woman by sprinkling water over her through the holes in





the wheels of the car which was his vehicle.

Into the hole of the yoke a gold coin, or the tali (marriage badge), is dropped, with the words "May this gold prove a blessing to you. May the yoke, the hole of the yoke, bring happiness to you. May we be blessed to unite your body with mine."

Then the bridegroom, sprinkling water over the yoke and coin, says:—" May you become purified by the sun through this purificatory water. May this water, which is the cause of thunder and lightning, bring happiness to you. Oh ! girl, may this water give you health and long life. A new and costly silk cloth (**kurai**), purchased by the bridegroom, is given to the bride, and the bridegroom says :—"Oh ! Indra, listen to my prayers ; accept them, and fulfil my desires."

The bride puts on the cloth, with the assistance of the bridegroom's sister, and sits on her father's lap. The bridegroom, taking up the tali, ties it by the string on the bride's neck,



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saying :—" Oh ! girl, I am tying the tali to secure religious merit."

This is not a Vedic verse, and **this part of the ceremony is not included in the Grihya Sutras.**

All the Brahmans assembled bless the couple by throwing rice over their heads. A dharbha waist-cord is passed round the waist of the bride, and the following is repeated :—"This girl is gazing at Agni, wishing for health, wealth, strength and children. I am binding her for her good."

The bridegroom then holds the hand of the bride, and both go to the sacred fire, where the former says :—" Let Surya lead to Agni, and may you obtain permission from the Aswins to do so. Go with me to my house. Be my wife, and the mistress of my house. Instruct and help me in the performance of sacrifices."

After offerings of ghi in the sacred fire, the bridegroom says :—"Soma was your husband ; Gandharva knew thee next ; Agni was your third



husband. I, son of man, am your fourth husband. Soma gave you to Gandharva, and Gandharva gave you to Agni, who gave to me with progeny and wealth."

The bridegroom takes hold of the bride's right wrist, and, pressing on the fingers, passes his hand over the united fingers three times. This is called **Panigrahanam**. To the Nambutiri Brahman this is a very important item, being the binding part of the marriage ceremonial.

Some years ago, at a village near **Chalakkudi** in the Cochin State, a Nambutiri refused to accept a girl as his bride, because the purohit inadvertently grasped her fingers, to show how it ought to be done at the time of the marriage ceremony. The purohit had to marry the girl himself.

The next item in the ceremonial is **Sapthapathi**, or the taking of the seven steps. This is considered as the most binding portion thereof. The bridegroom lifts the left foot of the bride seven times, repeating the following :—"





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One step for sap, may Vishnu go after thee.  
Two steps for juice, may Vishnu go after thee.  
Three steps for vows, may Vishnu go after thee.  
Four steps for comfort, may Vishnu go after thee.  
Five steps for cattle, may Vishnu go after thee.  
Six steps for the prospering of wealth, may Vishnu go after thee.  
Seven steps for the sevenfold hotriship,\* may Vishnu go after thee.  
With seven steps we have become companions. May I attain to friendship with thee. May I not be separated from thy friendship. Mayst thou not be separated from my friendship. Let us be united ; let us always take counsel together with good hearts and mutual love. May we grow in strength and prosperity together. Now we are one in minds, deeds, and desires. Thou art **Rik**, I am **Samam** ; I am the sky, thou art the earth ; I am the semen, thou art the bearer ; I am the mind, thou art the tongue. Follow me faithfully, that we may have wealth and children together. Come thou of sweet speech."



\* A hotri is one who presides at the time of sacrifices.

The bridegroom then does homam, repeating the following :—"We are offering oblations to Soma, Gandharva, and Agni. This girl has just passed her virginity. Make her leave her father's house. Bless her to remain fixed in her husband's house. May she have a good son by your blessing. Cause her to beget ten children, and I shall be the eleventh child. Oh ! Agni, bless her with children, and make them long-lived. Oh ! Varuna, I pray to you for the same thing. May this woman be freed from the sorrow arising out of sterility, and be blessed by **Garhapathyagni**. May she have a number of children in her, and become the mother of many living children. Oh ! girl, may your house never know lamentations during nights caused by deaths. May you live long and happy with your husband and children. May the sky protect thy back ; may Vayu strengthen your thighs ; and the Aswins your breast. May Savitri look after



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thy suckling sons. Until the garment is put on, may Brihaspathi guard them, and the **Viswedevas** afterwards. Oh ! Varuna, make me strong and healthy. Do not steal away years from our ages. All those who offer oblations pray for the same. Oh ! you all-pervading Agni, pacify Varuna ; you who blaze forth into flames to receive oblations, be friendly towards us. Be near us, and protect us. Receive, and be satisfied with our oblations. Make us prosperous. We are always thinking of you. Make our oblations to the several devatas, and give us medicine."

The bride next treads on a stone, and the bridegroom says :—" Oh ! girl, tread on this stone. Be firm like it. Destroy those who seek to do thee harm. Overcome thy enemies."

Some fried paddy is put in the sacred fire, and the bridegroom repeats the following :—" Oh ! Agni, I am offering the fried grains, so that this girl may be blessed with long life. Oh ! Agni, give me my wife with children, just as in olden





days you were given **Suryayi** with wealth. Oh ! Agni, bless my wife with lustre and longevity. Also bless her husband with long life, that she may live happily. Oh ! Agni, help us to overcome our enemies."

Again the bride treads on the stone, and the bridegroom says :—"Oh ! girl, tread on this stone, and be firm like it. Destroy those who seek to do thee harm. Overcome thy enemies." This is followed by the offering of fried grain with the following formula:—" The virgins prayed to Surya and Agni to secure husbands, and they were at once granted their boons. Such an Agni is now being propitiated by offerings of fried paddy. Let him make the bride leave her father's house."

For the third time, the bride treads on the stone, and fried paddy is offered with the formula :—" Oh ! Agni, thou art the giver of life, and receiver of oblations. Oblations of ghi are now offered to you. Bless the pair to be of one mind."



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The dharbha girdle is removed from the bride's waist, with the verse : "I am loosening you from the bondage of Varuna. I am now removing the thread with which Surya bound you."

Those assembled then disperse. Towards evening, Brahmans again assemble, and the bride and bridegroom sit before the sacred fire, while the former repeat several Vedic riks. They are supposed to start for their home, driving in a carriage, and the verses repeated have reference to the chariot, horses, boats, etc. After ghi has been poured into the fire, a child, who should be a male who has not lost brothers or sisters, is seated in the lap of the bride, and the bridegroom says :—" May cows, horses, men, and wealth, increase in this house. Let this child occupy your lap, just as the Soma creeper which gives strength to the Devatas occupies the regions of the stars."

Giving some plantain fruit to the child, the bridegroom says :—"Oh ! fruits, ye bear seeds.



May my wife bear seeds likewise by your blessing."

Then the pair are shown **Druva** and **Arundathi** (the pole star and Ursa major), which are worshipped with the words :—" The seven Rishis who have led to firmness, she, Arundathi, who stands first among the six Krithikas (**Pleiads**), may she the eighth one, who leads the conjunction of the (moon with the) six **Krithikas**, the first (among conjunctions) shine upon us. Firm dwelling, firm origin; the firm one art thou, standing on the side of firmness. Thou art the pillar of the stars. Thus protect me against my adversaries."

They then proceed to perform the **Sthalipaka** ceremony, in which the bride should cook some rice, which the bridegroom offers as an oblation in the sacred fire. In practice, however, a little food is brought, and placed in the fire without being cooked. The purohit decorates a Ficus stick with dharbha grass, and gives it to the bridegroom. It is placed in the roof, or





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somewhere within the house, near the seed-pans.

[According to the Grihya Sutras, the couple ought to occupy the same mat, with the stick between them. This is not in vogue amongst several sections of Brahmans. The Mysore Carnatakas, Mandya Aiyangars, and Shivallis, observe a kindred ceremony. Amongst the **Mandyas**, for example, on the fourth night of the marriage rites, the bridal couple occupy the same mat for a short time, and a stick is placed between them. The **Pajamadme**, or mat marriage, amongst the Shivalli Brahmans, evidently refers to this custom.]

On the second and third days of the marriage ceremonies, homams are performed in the morning and evening, and the **nalagu** ceremony is performed. In this, the couple are seated on two planks covered with mats and cloth, amidst a large number of women assembled within the pandal. In front of them, betel leaves, areca nuts, fruits, flowers, and turmeric paste are



placed in a tray. The women sing songs which they have learnt from childhood, and the bride also sings the praises of the bridegroom. Taking a little of the turmeric paste rendered red by the addition of chunam (lime), she makes marks by drawing lines over the feet (nalangu idal). The ceremony closes with the waving of arathi (water coloured red with turmeric and chunam), and the distribution of pan-supari (betel leaves and areca nuts).

The waving is done by two women, who sing appropriate songs. On the fourth day, Brahmans assemble, and the pair are seated in their midst. After the recitation of Vedic verses, the contracting couple are blessed. A small quantity of turmeric paste, reddened by the addition of chunam, is mixed with ghi, and smeared over the shoulders of the pair, and a mark is made on their foreheads. This is called **Pachchai Kalyanam**, and is peculiar to Tamil Brahmans, both Smarthas and Vaishnavas.

Amongst Tamil Brahmans, prominence is



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given to the maternal uncles on the fourth day. The bride and bridegroom are carried astride on the shoulders of their uncles, who dance to the strains of a band. When they meet, the couple exchange garlands (**malaimaththal**).

Towards evening, a procession is got up at the expense of the maternal uncle of the bride, and is hence called **Amman Kolam**. The bride is dressed up as a boy, and another girl is dressed up to represent the bride. They are taken in procession through the streets, and, on their return, the pseudo-bridegroom is made to speak to the real bridegroom in somewhat insolent tones, and some mock play is indulged in. The real bridegroom is addressed as if he was the **syce** (groom) or **gumastha** (clerk) of the pseudo-bridegroom, and is sometimes treated as a thief, and judgment passed on him by the latter.

Among Sri Vaishnavas, after the **Pachchai** smearing ceremony, the bridal couple roll a cocoanut to and fro across the dais, and the





assembled Brahmans chant stanzas in Tamil composed by a Vaishnava lady named **Andal**, an avatar of Lakshmi, who dedicated herself to Vishnu.

In these stanzas, she narrates to her attendants the dream, in which she went through the marriage ceremony after her dedication to the god. **Pan-supari**, of which a little, together with some money, is set apart for Andal, is then distributed to all present. A large crowd generally assembles, as it is believed that the chanting of Andal's **srisukthi** (praise of Lakshmi) brings a general blessing. The family priest calls out the names and gotras of those who have become related to the bride and bridegroom through their marriage. As each person's name is called out, he or she is supposed to make a present of cloths, money, etc., to the bridegroom or bride.

*[The Telugu and Carnataka Brahmans, instead of the Pachchai Kalyanam, perform a ceremony called **Nagavali** on the fourth or fifth*



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day. Thirty-two lights and two vessels, representing Siva and Parvathi, are arranged in the form of a square. Unbleached thread, soaked in turmeric paste, is passed round the square, and tied to the pandal. The bridal couple sit in front of the square, and, after doing puja (worship), cut the thread, and take their seats within the square. The bridegroom ties a tali of black glass beads on the bride's neck, in the presence of 33 crores (330 millions) of gods, represented by a number of small pots arranged round the square. Close to the pots are the figures of two elephants, designed in rice grains and salt respectively.

After going round the pots, the couple separate, and the bridegroom stands by the salt elephant, and the bride by the other. They then talk about the money value of the two animals, and an altercation takes place, during which they again go round the pots, and stand, the bridegroom near the rice elephant, and the bride near the salt one. The bargaining as to the



*price of the animals is renewed, and the couple go round the pots once more.*

*This ceremony is followed by a burlesque of domestic life. The bride is presented with two wooden dolls from Tirupati, and told to make a cradle out of the bridegroom's turmeric-coloured cloth, which he wore on the tali-tying day. The couple converse on domestic matters, and the bridegroom asks the bride to attend to her household affairs, so that he may go to his duties. She pleads her inability to do so because of the children, and asks him to take charge of them.*

*She then shows the babies (dolls) to all present, and a good deal of fun is made out of the incident. The bride, with her mother standing by her side near two empty chairs, is then introduced to her new relations by marriage, who sit in pairs on the chairs, and make presents of pan-supari and turmeric]*

*On the fifth day of the marriage ceremonies, before dawn, the bridal couple are seated on*





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the dais, and the Gandharva stick is removed, with the words:—" Oh! Visvawasu Gandharva, I pray to you to make this girl my wife. Unite her with me. Leave her, and seek another."

The bridegroom then performs homams. A coin is placed on the bride's head, and a little ghi put thereon. Gazing at the bridegroom, she says :—"With a loving heart I regard thee who knowest my heart. Thou art radiant with tapas (penance). Fill me with a child, and this house of ours with wealth. Thou art desirous of a son. Thus shalt thou reproduce thyself."

Looking at the bride, the bridegroom then says :—" I see thee radiant and eager to be filled with child by me. Thou art in thy youth now. Enjoy me, therefore, while I am over you, and so reproduce thyself, being desirous of a son."

Touching the bride's breasts with his ring-finger, and then touching his heart, he repeats the following :—" May the Viswe gods unite our hearts ; may the water unite our hearts ; may



**Vayu** and **Brahma** unite our hearts ; and may Sarasvati teach us both conversation appropriate to this occasion of our intercourse."

More Vedic riks are then recited, as follows :  
— " Thou Prajapathi, enter my body that I may have vigour during this act ; so thou **Thvastri**, who fashionest forms with Vishnu and other gods ; so thou Indra, who grantest boons with thy friends the Viswedevas, by thy blessing may we have many sons. May Vishnu make thy womb ready ; may Thvashti frame the shape (of the child) ; may Prajapathi pour forth (the sperm) ; may Dhatri give thee conception. Give conception, **Sinivali** ; give conception, Sarasvati. May the two Asvins, wreathed with lotus, give conception to thee. The embryo which the two Asvins produce with their golden kindling sticks, that embryo we call into thy womb, that thou mayst give birth to it after ten months. As the earth is pregnant with Agni, as the heaven is pregnant with Indra, as Vayu dwells in the womb of the regions (of the earth), thus I place



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an embryo in thy womb. Open thy womb ; take in the sperm. May a male child, an embryo, be begotten in the womb. The mother bears him ten months, may he be born, the most valiant of his kin. May a male embryo enter the womb, as an arrow the quiver ; may a man be born here, thy son, after ten months. I do with thee (the work) that is sacred to Prajapathi ; may an embryo enter the womb. May a child be born without deficiency, with all its limbs, not blind, not lame, not sucked out by **Pisachas**" (devils).

The marriage is brought to a close, after this recitation, with the presentation of fruits, etc., to all the Brahmans assembled, and to all relations, children included. The bridegroom chews betel for the first time on this day. The wrist-threads are removed, and the seed-pans containing the seedlings, which have been worshipped daily, are taken in procession to a tank (pond), into which the seedlings are thrown.

It will be noticed that prayers for male issue





are of frequent occurrence during the marriage ceremonial. In Sanskrit works, **Putra** (son) is defined as one who delivers a parent from a hell called put. It is generally believed that the welfare of a parent's soul depends on the performance of sradh (memorial services) by his son.

It was laid down by **Manu** that a man is perfect, when he consists of three—**himself, his wife, and his son.**

*In the Rig Veda it is stated that "when a father sees the face of a living son, he pays a debt in him, and gains immortality. The pleasure which a father has in his son exceeds all other enjoyments. His wife is a friend, his daughter an object of companion, his son shines as his light in the highest world."*

The following story of a certain pious man of ascetical temperament, who determined to shirk the religious duty of taking a wife, is narrated by Monier Williams;—"Quietly skipping over the second prescribed period of life, during which



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*he ought to have been a householder (grihastha), he entered at once upon the third period—that is to say, he became an ascetic, abjured all female society, and retired to the woods. Wandering about one day, absorbed in meditation, he was startled by an extraordinary spectacle. He saw before him a deep and apparently bottomless pit. Around its edge some unhappy men were hanging suspended by ropes of grass, at which here and there a rat was nibbling. On asking their history, he discovered to his horror that they were his own ancestors compelled to hang in this unpleasant manner, and doomed eventually to fall into the abyss, unless he went back into the world, did his duty like a man, married a suitable wife, and had a son, who would be able to release them from their critical predicament."*

This legend is recorded in detail in the Mahabharata. A curious mock marriage ceremony is celebrated amongst Brahmans when an individual marries a third wife. It is



believed that a third marriage is very inauspicious, and that the bride will become a widow. To prevent this mishap, the man is made to marry the **arka** plant (*Calotropis gigantea*), and the real marriage thus becomes the fourth. If this ceremony is carried on in orthodox fashion, it is generally celebrated on some Sunday or Monday, when the constellation **Astham** is visible. The bridegroom and a Brahman priest, accompanied by a third Brahman, repair to a spot where the arka plant (a very common weed) is growing. The plant is decorated with a cloth and a piece of string, and symbolised into the sun. The bridegroom then invokes it thus:—"Oh! master of three loks. Oh! the seven-horsed, Oh ! Ravi, avert the evils of the third marriage."

Next the plant is addressed with the words :—"You are the oldest of the plants of this world. Brahma created you to save such of us as have to marry a third time, so please become my wife."





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The Brahman who accompanies the bridegroom becomes his father-in-law for the moment, and says to him :—" I give you in marriage Aditya's great grand-daughter, Savi's grand-daughter, and my daughter **Arkakanya**."

All the ceremonies, such as making homam, tali-tying, etc., are performed as at a regular marriage, and, after the recitation of a few sentences from the Vedas, the plant is cut down.

"The plant," Mr. A. Srinivasan writes,\* "is named arka after the sun. When the car of the sun turns towards the north, every Hindu applies the leaves of this plant to his head before he bathes, in honour of the event. The plant is, besides, **believed to be a willing scapegoat to others' ills**. Oil and ghi applied to the head of the victim of persistent illness has only to be transferred to this plant, when it withers and saves the man, even as Baber is said to have saved his son. The poet Kalidasa describes sweet **Sakuntala**, born of a shaggy



dweller of the forest, as a **garland of jasmine** thrown on an arka plant. '*May the arka grow luxuriant in your house* ' is the **commonest form of curse.** ' Be thou belaboured with arka leaves ' is familiar in the mouths of reprimanding mothers. Adulterers were, half a century ago, seated on an ass, face to the tail, and marched through the village. The public disgrace was enhanced by placing a garland of the despised arka leaves on their head. [*Uppiliyan women convicted of immorality are said to be garlanded with arrka flowers, and made to carry a basket of mud round the village.*] A Telugu proverb asks 'Does the bee ever seek the arka flower ? '

The reasons for the ill-repute that this plant suffers from are not at all clear. The fact that it has a partiality for wastes has evidently brought on its devoted head the dismal associations of desolation, but there would seem **to be more deep-seated hatred to the plant** than has been explained."

A Tamil proverb has it that he who crushes



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the **bud of the arka earns merit**. Some Telugu and Canarese Brahmans, who follow the Yajur Veda or Rig Veda, consider the arka plant as sacred, and use the leaves thereof during the **nandhi** (ancestor invoking) ceremony, which is performed as one of the marriage rites. Two or three arka leaves, with betel leaves and areca nuts, are tied to the cloth, which is attached to a stick as representing the ancestors (**pithrus**). With some the arka leaves are replaced by leaves of *Pongamia glabra*. On **rathasapthami** day (the seventh day after the new moon in the month **Avani**), an orthodox Hindu should bathe his head and shoulders with arka leaves in propitiation of Surya (the sun). Brahmans who follow the Sama Veda, during the annual **upakarmam** ceremony, make use of arka leaves and flowers in worshipping the Rishis and Pithrus.

On the **upakarmam** day, the Sama Vedis invoke their sixty-two Rishis and the last three ancestors, who are represented by sixty-five





clay balls placed on arka leaves. To them are offered arka flowers, fruits of **karai-chedi** (*Canthium parviflorum*), and naval (*Eugenia Jainbolana*). In addition to this worship, they perform the **Rishi** and **Pithru tharpanam** by offering water, gingelly (*Sesamum indicum*) seeds, and rice. The celebrant, prior to dipping his hand into the water, places in his hands two arka leaves, gingelly, and rice. The juice of the arka plant is a favourite agent in the hands of suicides.

Among the **Tangalan Paraiyans**, if a young man dies before he is married, a ceremony called **kannikazhithal** (removing bachelorhood) is performed. Before the corpse is laid on the bier, a garland of arka flowers is placed round its neck, and balls of mud from a gutter are laid on the head, knees, and other parts of the body.

In some places a variant of the ceremony consists in the erection of a mimic marriage booth, which is covered with leaves of the arka plant, flowers of which are also placed round



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the neck as a garland. At a form of marriage called **rambha** or **kathali** (plantain) marriage, the arka plant is replaced by a plantain tree (*Musa*). It is performed by those who happen to be eldest brothers, and who are incapable of getting married, so as to give a chance to younger brothers, who are not allowed to marry unless the elder brother or brothers are already married.

At the present day, many Hindus disregard certain ceremonies, in the celebration of which their forefathers were most scrupulous. Even the daily ceremonial ablutions, which are all important to a Brahman from a **shastraic** point of view, are now neglected by a large majority, and the prayers (mantrams), which should be chanted during their performance, are forgotten.

But no Brahman, orthodox or unorthodox, dares to abandon the death ceremonial, and annual sradh (memorial rites). A Brahman beggar, when soliciting alms, invariably pleads that he has to perform his father or mother's



**sradh**, or **upanayanam** (thread ceremony) of his children, and he rarely goes away empty-handed.

"The constant periodical performance," Monier Williams writes,\* "of commemorative obsequies is regarded in the light of a positive and peremptory obligation. It is the simple discharge of a solemn debt to one's forefathers, a debt consisting not only in reverential homage, but in the performance of acts necessary to their support, happiness, and progress onwards in the spiritual world. A man's deceased relatives, for at least three generations, are among his cherished divinities, and must be honoured by daily offerings and adoration, or a **nemesis** of some kind is certain to overtake his living family. The object of a Hindu funeral is nothing less than the investiture of the departed spirit with an intermediate gross body — a peculiar frame interposed, as it were parenthetically, between the terrestrial gross body, which has just been destroyed by fire,





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and the new terrestrial body, which it is compelled to ultimately assume. The creation of such an intervenient frame, composed of gross elements, though less gross than those of earth, becomes necessary, because the individualised spirit of man, after the cremation of the terrestrial body, has nothing left to withhold it from re-absorption into the universal soul, except its incombustible subtle body, which, as composed of the subtle elements, is not only proof against the fire of the funeral pile, but is incapable of any sensations in the temporary heaven, or temporary hell, through one or other of which every separate human spirit is forced to pass before returning to earth, and becoming re-invested with a terrestrial gross body."

\* Religious Thought and Life in India

When a Brahman is on the point of death, he is removed from his bed, and laid on the floor. If there is any fear of the day being a **danishtapanchami** (inauspicious), the dying



man is taken out of the house, and placed in the court-yard or pial (raised verandah). Some prayers are uttered, and a cow is presented (**godhanam**). These are intended to render the passage of life through the various parts of the body as easy as possible. The spirit is supposed to escape through one of the nine orifices of the body, according to the character of the individual concerned. That of a good man leaves the body through the **brahmarandhra** (top of the skull), and that of a bad man through the anus.

Immediately after death, the body is washed, religious marks are made on the forehead, and parched paddy and betel are scattered over and around it by the son. As a Brahman is supposed always to have his fire with him, the sacred fire is lighted. At this stage, certain purificatory ceremonies are performed, if death has taken place on a day or hour of evil omen, or at midnight. Next, a little cooked rice is cooked in a new earthen pot, and a new cloth is thrown over



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the corpse, which is roused by the recitation of mantrams. Four bearers, to each of whom dharbha grass is given in token of his office, are selected to carry the corpse to the burning-ground. The eldest son, who is the funeral celebrant, and his brothers are shaved.

On ordinary occasions, brothers should not be shaved on the same day, as this would be inauspicious. They are only shaved on the same day on the occasion of the death of their father or mother. The widow of the deceased, and female relations, go three times round the corpse, before it is placed on the bier. Very often, at this stage, all the women present set up a loud lamentation, and repeat the death songs.\*

\* See Thurston, *Ethnographic Notes in Southern India*, 1906, pp. 229—37.

If the dead person was a respected elder, special professional women, trained as mourners, are engaged. I am informed that, in





the Coimbatore district, and amongst the **Sathyamangalam Brahacharanams**, there are certain widows who are professional mourners. As soon as they hear of the death of an elder, they repair to the house, and worry the bereaved family into engaging them for a small fee.

The space, which intervenes between the dead man's house and the burning-ground, is divided into four parts. When the end of the first of these is reached, the corpse is placed on the ground, and the sons and nephews go round it, repeating mantrams. They untie their **kudumis** (hair knot), leaving part thereof loose, tie up the rest into a small bunch, and keep on slapping their thighs. [*When children at play have their kudumi partially tied, and slap their thighs, they are invariably scolded, owing to the association with funerals.*]

A little cooked rice is offered to the path as a **pathi bali** (wayside offering), to propitiate evil spirits, or **bhuthas**. The same ceremonial



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should, strictly speaking, be performed at two other spots, but now-a-days it is the custom to place the corpse on the ground near the funeral pyre, moving its position three times, while the circumambulation and pathi bali are gone through only once.

As soon as the corpse has reached the spot where the pyre is, the celebrant of the rites sprinkles water thereon, and throws a quarter of an anna on it as the equivalent of purchase of the ground for cremation. The sacred fire is lighted, and the right palm of the corpse is touched with a gold coin. The nine orifices of the body are then smeared with ghi, and rice is thrown over the corpse, and placed in its mouth. The son takes a burning brand from the sacred fire, lights the pyre, and looks at the sun. He then carries a pot filled with water, having a hole at the bottom through which the water trickles out, on his shoulders three times round the corpse, and, at the end of the third round, throws it down.



Then he, and all the relations of the deceased, squat on the ground, facing east, take up some dharbha grass, and, cutting it into small fragments with their nails, scatter them in the air, while repeating some Vedic verses, which are chanted very loudly and slowly, especially at the funeral of a respected elder. The celebrant then pours a little water on a stone, and sprinkles himself with it. This is also done by the other relations, and they pass beneath a bundle of dharbha grass and twigs of *Ficus glomerata* held by the purohit (officiating priest), and gaze for a moment at the sun. Once more they sprinkle themselves with water, and proceed to a tank, where they bathe.

When they return home, two rites, called **nagna** (naked) **sradh**, and **pashana sthapanam** (stone-fixing), are celebrated. The disembodied spirit is supposed to be naked after the body has been cremated. To clothe it, offerings of water, with balls of cooked rice, are made, and a cloth, lamp, and money are given to a





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Brahman. Then two stones are set up, one in the house and the other on the bank of a tank, to represent the spirit of the deceased. For ten days, libations of water mixed with gingelly seeds, called **tilothakam**, and a ball of cooked rice, must be offered to the stones. The ball of rice is left for crows to eat. The number of libations must be seventy-five, commencing with three on the first day, and increasing the number daily by one. In addition, three further libations are made daily by dipping a piece of cloth from the winding-sheet, and rinsing it over the stone (**vasothakam**).

On the day after cremation, the relations assemble at the burning-ground, and the son, after extinguishing the burning embers, removes the fragments of bones from the ashes. The ceremony is called **sanchyanam** (gathering). Cooked food is offered. The bones are thrown into some sacred river, or buried in the ground. On the tenth day after death, a large quantity of cooked rice (**prabhuthabali**) is



offered to the spirit of the dead person, which is believed to grow very hungry on that day.

The food is heaped up on plantain leaves, and all the near relations go round them, crying and beating their breasts. It is mostly females who perform this rite, males standing aloof. The food is taken to a tank, and the widow, decorated and dressed up, is conducted thither. The food is thrown into the water, and, if the widow is an elderly orthodox woman, her tali is removed. On the same day, her head is clean shaved.

A widow is not allowed to adorn herself with jewels and finery except on this day, when all her close relations come and see her. If this is not done, pregnant women may not see her for a year. All the agnates should be present on the tenth day, and perform **tharpana** (oblations of water).

Until this day they are under pollution, and, after prabhuthabali, they bathe, and homam is performed. Some ashes from the sacred fire are



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mixed with ghi, and a mark is made on the foreheads of those who are under pollution, to remove it.

During the period of pollution, a Sri Vaishnava will have only a white mark without the red streak on his forehead ; a Madhva will not have the black dot ; and **Smarthas** avoid having marks altogether. The tenth day ceremony is called **Dasaham**. On the eleventh day, a ceremony called **Ekodishtam** (eleventh day ceremony) is performed.

A Brahman is seated to represent the **pretha** or dead person, and fed after going through sradh rites. As a rule, the man is a close relation of the deceased. But, amongst certain classes of Brahmans, an outsider is engaged, and well remunerated.

On the twelfth day, the **Sapindikaranam** (**sapinda**, kinsman) ceremony, which is just like the ordinary sradh, is performed. At the close thereof, six balls of cooked rice are offered to three ancestors, male and female (three balls





for males, and three for females). These balls are arranged in two rows, with a space between them. An elongated mass of food is placed between the rows, and divided with blades of dharbha grass into three portions, which are arranged close to the balls of rice. This is regarded as uniting the dead man with the **pitris** (ancestors).

A cow is usually presented just before the union takes place, and the gift is believed to render the crossing of the river **Vaitarani** (river of death) easy for the departed soul. The Sapindikaranam is a very important ceremony. When there is a dispute concerning division of property on the death of an individual, the ceremony is not performed until the parties come to an agreement.

For instance, if a married man dies without issue, and his widow's brothers-in-law cannot come to terms as regards the partition of the property, the widow may refuse to allow the performance of the ceremony. The



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Sapindikaranam should, according to the shastras, be performed a year after death, i.e., on the completion of all the **Masikas** (monthly sradhs). But, at the present day, a ceremony called **Shodasam** (the sixteen) is performed just before the Sapindikaranam on the twelfth day.

In the course of the year, twelve monthly and four quarterly sradhs should be performed. The Shodasam ceremony, which is carried out *in lieu* thereof, consists in giving presents of money and vessels to sixteen Brahmans. On the twelfth day, a feast is held, and domestic worship is carried out on a large scale. At the close thereof, a sloka called **Charma sloka**, in praise of the deceased, is composed and repeated by someone versed in Sanskrit.

Every month, for a year after a death in a family, sradh should, as indicated, be performed. This corresponds in detail with the annual sradh, which is regularly performed, unless a visit is paid to Gaya, which renders further performance of the rite not obligatory.



For the performance of this ceremony by the nearest agnate of the deceased (eldest son or other), three Brahmans should be called in, to represent respectively Vishnu, the Devatas, and the ancestors. Sometimes two Brahmans are made to suffice, and Vishnu is represented by a **salagrama** stone.

In extreme cases, only one Brahman assists at the ceremony, the two others being represented by dharbha grass. The sacred fire is lighted, and ghi, a small quantity of raw and cooked rice, and vegetables are offered up in the tire. The Brahmans then wash their feet, and are fed. Before they enter the space set apart for the meal, water, gingelly, and rice are sprinkled about it, to keep off evil spirits. As soon as the meal is finished, a ball of rice, called **vayasa pindam** (crow's food), is offered to the pithru devatas (ancestors of three generations), and thrown to the crows.

If they do not eat the rice, the omens are considered to be unfavourable.





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The Brahmans receive betel and money in payment for their services. On one occasion my assistant was in camp at Kodaikanal on the Palni hills, the higher altitudes of which are uninhabited by crows, and he had perforce to march down to the plains, in order to perform the annual ceremony for his deceased father. The recurring annual sradh (**Pratyabdhika**) need not of necessity be performed.

It is, however, regarded as an important ceremony, and, should an individual neglect it, he would run the risk of being excommunicated. The rites connected with the dead are based on the **Garuda Purana**, according to which the libations of the ten days are said to help the growth of the body of the soul. In this connection, Monier Williams writes as follows :—\* "On the first day, the ball (pinda) of rice offered by the eldest son or other near relative nourishes the spirit of the deceased in such a way as to furnish it with a head ; on the second day, the offered pinda gives a neck and



shoulders ; on the third day a heart ; on the fourth a back; on the fifth a navel ; on the sixth a groin and the parts usually concealed ; on the seventh thighs ; on the eighth and ninth knees and feet. On the tenth day, the intermediate body is sufficiently formed to produce the sensation of hunger and thirst. Other pindas are therefore put before it, and, on the eleventh and twelfth days, the embodied spirit feeds voraciously on the offerings thus supplied, and so gains strength for its journey to its future abode. Then, on the thirteenth day after death, it is conducted either to heaven or hell. If to the latter, it has need of the most nourishing food, to enable it to bear up against the terrible ordeal which awaits it."

\* op. cit.

To the Hindu mind, Yama (the god of death) is a hideous god, whose servants are represented as being capable of tormenting the soul of the dead.



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"No sooner," writes Monier Williams, "has death occurred, and cremation of the terrestrial body taken place, than Yama's two messengers (**Yama Dutan**), who are waiting near at hand, make themselves visible to the released spirit, which retains its subtle body composed of the subtle elements, and is said to be of the size of a thumb (**angustha-matra**). Their aspect is terrific, for they have glaring eyes, hair standing erect, gnashing teeth, crow-black skin, and claw-like nails, and they hold in their hands the awful rod and noose of Yama. Then, as if their appearance in this form were not sufficiently alarming, they proceed to terrify their victim by terrible visions of the torments (**yatana**) in store for him. They then convey the bound spirit along the road to Yama's abode. Being led before Yama's judgment seat, it is confronted with his Registrar or Recorder named **Chitra Gupta**. This officer stands by Yama's side, with an open book before him. It is his business to note down all the good and evil deeds of every human





being born into the world, with the resulting merit (**punya**) and demerit (**papa**), and to produce a debtor and creditor account properly made up and balanced on the day when that being is brought before Yama.

“According to the balance on the side of merit or demerit is judgment pronounced. The road by which Yama's two officers force a wicked man to descend to the regions of torment is described in the first two chapters of the **Garuda Purana**. The length of the way is said to be 86,000 leagues (**yojanas**). The condemned soul, invested with its sensitive body, and made to travel at the rate of 200 leagues a day, finds no shady trees, no resting place, no food, no water.

“At one time it is scorched by a burning heat equal to that of twelve meridian suns, at another it is pierced by icy cold winds ; now its tender frame is rent by thorns ; now it is attacked by lions, tigers, savage dogs, venomous serpents, and scorpions. In one place it has to traverse a



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dense forest, whose leaves are swords; in another it falls into deep pits; in another it is precipitated from precipices; in another it has to walk on the edge of razors ; in another on iron spikes. Here it stumbles about helplessly in profound darkness ; there it struggles through loathsome mud swarming with leeches ; here it toils through burning sand ; there its progress is arrested by heaps of red-hot charcoal and stifling smoke.

“Compelled to pass through every obstacle, however formidable, it next encounters a succession of terrific showers, not of rain, but of live coals, stones, blood, boiling water and filth. Then it has to descend into appalling fissures, or ascend to sickening heights, or lose itself in vast caves, or wade through lakes seething with foetid ordures.

“Then midway it has to pass the awful river Vaitarani, one hundred leagues in breadth, of unfathomable depth ; flowing with irresistible impetuosity ; filled with blood, matter, hair, and



bones ; infested with huge sharks, crocodiles, and sea monsters ; darkened by clouds of hideous vultures and obscene birds of prey. Thousands of condemned spirits stand trembling on the banks, horrified by the prospect before them. Consumed by a raging thirst, they drink the blood which flows at their feet ; then, tumbling headlong into the torrent, they are overwhelmed by the rushing waves. Finally, they are hurried down to the lowest depths of hell, and yet not destroyed. Pursued by Yama's officers, they are dragged away, and made to undergo inconceivable tortures, the detail of which is given with the utmost minuteness in the succeeding chapters of the Garuda Purana."

The **Ahannikams**, or daily observances, of a religious Brahman are very many. Nowadays, Brahmans who lead a purely religious life are comparatively few, and are mostly found in villages. The daily observances of such are the bath, the performance of the Sandhya service,





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Brahma yagna, Deva puja or **Devatarchana**, Tarpana (oblations of water), Vaisvadeva ceremony, and the reading of Puranas or **Ithihasas**.

Every orthodox Brahman is expected to rise at the time called **Brahma Muhurtam** in the hour and a half before sunrise. He should then clean his teeth, using as a brush mango leaf, or twigs of *Acacia arabica* or nim (*Melia Asadirachta*). He next bathes in a river or tank (pond), standing knee-deep in the water, and repeating the following :—" I am about to perform the morning ablution in this sacred stream (Ganges, Sarasvati, Yamuna, Godavari, etc.), in the presence of the gods and Brahmans, with a view to the removal of guilt resulting from act, speech, and thought, from what has been touched and untouched, known and unknown, eaten and not eaten, drunk and not drunk."

After the bath, he wipes his body with a damp cloth, and puts on his cotton **madi** cloth, which has been washed and dried. The cloth, washed,



wrung, and hung up to dry, should not be touched by anybody. If this should happen prior to the bath, the cloth is polluted, and ceases to be *madi*. A silk cloth, which cannot be polluted, is substituted for it. The *madi* or silk cloth should be worn until the close of the morning ceremonies and meal. The man next puts the marks which are characteristic of his sect on the forehead and body, and performs the Sandhya service. This is very important, and is binding on all Brahmans after the Upanayanam ceremony, though a large number are not particular in observing it.

“According to the shastras, the Sandhya should be done in the morning and evening ; but in practice there is an additional service at midday. **Sandhyavandhanam** means the thanksgiving to God when day and night meet in the morning and evening. The rite commences with the sipping of water (**achamanam**) from the hollow of the right palm. This is done three times, while the words **Achyuthayanamaha**,



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**Anantayanamaha**, and **Govindayana** are repeated. Immediately after sipping, twelve parts of the body are touched with the fingers of the right hand in the following order : —

The two cheeks with the thumb, repeating the names **Kesava** and **Narayana** ;

The two eyes with the ring-finger, repeating **Madhava** and **Govinda**;

The two sides of the nose with the forefinger, repeating **Vishnu** and **Madhusudhana**;

The two ears with the little finger, repeating **Trivkrama** and **Vamana** ;

The shoulders with the middle finger, repeating **Sridhara** and **Rishikesa** ;

The navel and head with all the fingers, repeating **Padmanabha** and **Damodar**.

This Achamana is the usual preliminary to all Brahman religious rites. The water sipped is believed to cleanse the internal parts of the body, as bathing cleanses the external parts.

After Achamana comes Pranayama, or





holding in of vital breath, which consists in repeating the Gayatri (hymn) and holding the breath by three distinct operations, viz. : —

**Puraka**, or pressing the right nostril with the fingers, and drawing in the breath through the left nostril, and vice versa.

**Kumbhaka**, or pressing both nostrils with finger and thumb or with all the fingers, and holding the breath as long as possible.

**Rechaka**, or pressing the right nostril with the thumb, and expelling the breath through the left nostril, and vice versa.

The suppression of the breath is said to be a preliminary yoga practice, enabling a person to fix his mind on the Supreme Being who is meditated on. The celebrant next repeats the **Sankalpa** (determination), with the hands brought together, the right palm over the left, and placed on the right thigh. Every kind of ceremony commences with the Sankalpa, which, for the Sandhya service, is as follows :—



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"I am worshipping for the removal of all my sins that have adhered to me, and for the purpose of acquiring the favour of Narayana or the Supreme Being."

The performer of the rite then sprinkles himself with water, repeating :—" Oh ! ye waters, the sources of all comforts, grant us food, so that our senses may grow strong and give us joy. Make us the recipients of your essence, which is the most blissful, just as affectionate mothers (feed their children with milk from their breasts). May we obtain enough of that essence of yours, the existence of which within you makes you feel glad. Oh ! waters, grant us offspring."

He then takes up the water in his palm, and drinks it, repeating the following :—" May the sun and anger, may the lords of anger, preserve me from my sins of pride and passion. Whate'er the nightly sins of thought, word, deed, wrought by my mind, my speech, my hands, my feet ; wrought through my appetite and sensual



organs ; may the departing night remove them all. In thy immortal light, Oh ! radiant sun, I offer up myself and this my guilt."

At the evening service, the same is repeated, with the word Agni instead of Surya (sun). At the midday service the following is recited : — " May the waters purify the earth by pouring down rain. May the earth thus purified make us pure. May the waters purify my spiritual preceptor, and may the Veda (as taught by the purified preceptor) purify me. Whatever leavings of another's food, and whatever impure things I may have eaten, whatever I may have received as gift from the unworthy, may the waters destroy all that sin and purify me. For this purpose, I pour this sanctified water as a libation down my mouth."

Once more the celebrant sprinkles himself with water, and says :—"I sing the praise of the god **Dadikravan**, who is victorious, all-pervading, and who moves with great speed. May he make our mouths (and the senses)





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fragrant, and may he prolong our lives. Oh ! ye waters, the sources of all comforts, grant us food," etc.

The ceremonies performed so far are intended for both external and internal purification. By their means, the individual is supposed to have made himself worthy to salute the Lord who resides in the orb of the rising luminary, and render him homage in true Brahman style by what is called **Arghya**. This is an offering of water to any respected guest. Repeating the Gayatri, the worshipper throws water in the air from the palms of the hands joined together with the sacred thread round the thumbs. The Gayatri is the hymn *par excellence*, and is said to contain the sum and substance of all Vedic teaching. After these items, the worshipper sits down, and does Japam (recitation of prayers in an undertone). The Gayatri, as repeated, consists of the Gayatri proper **Vyahritis**, and *Gayatri Siromantra*. It runs as follows :



Om, Bhuh ; Om, Bhuvah ;

Om, Suvah ; Om, Mahaha ;

Om, Janaha ; Om, Thapaha ;

Om, Sathyam.

Om, Thatsaviturvarenyam ;

Bhargodevasya dhimahi dhiyo-yonah  
prachodayat;

Om, Jyotiraso amrutam

Brahma, Bhur, Bhuvastvarum.

The **Vyahritis** are generally taken to refer to the seven worlds, and the prefixing of the **Pranava** (Om) means that all these worlds have sprung from the Supreme Being. The Pranava given above means "All the seven worlds are (the visible manifestations of) **Om**, the all-pervading Brahman. We think of the adorable light of the Lord, who shines in our hearts, and guides us. May he guide our intellects aright. Water, light, all things that have savour (such as trees, herbs, and plants), the nectar of the gods, the three worlds, in fact everything that is



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Brahman, the universal soul."

The mystic syllable Om is the most sacred of all Hindu utterances. Concerning it, Monier Williams writes that it is "made up of the three letters A,U,M, and symbolical of the threefold manifestation of the one Supreme Being in the gods Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, and is constantly repeated during the **Sandhya** service. This prayer is, as we have seen, the most sacred of all Vedic utterances, and, like the Lord's Prayer among Christians, or like the **Fatihah** or opening chapter of the Kuran among Muhammadans, must always, among Hindus, take precedence of all other forms of supplication."

The celebrant next proceeds to invoke the **Gayatri Devata** thus :—"May the goddess Gayatri Devata, who grants all our desires, come to us to make known to us the eternal Lord, who is revealed to us only through the scriptures. May the Gayatri, the mother of all the Vedas, reveal to us the eternal truth. Oh !





Gayatri, thou art the source of all spiritual strength. Thou art the power that drivest away the evil inclinations which are mine enemies. Thou, by conducting to a sound mind, conducest to a sound body. Thou art the light of the gods, that dispellest my intellectual darkness, and illuminest my heart with divine wisdom. Thou art all. In the whole universe there is naught but thee that is.

“Thou art the eternal truth that destroys all sins. Thou art the Pranava that reveals to me the unknown. Come to my succour. Oh! thou Gayatri, and make me wise.”

This invocation is followed by the repetition of the Gayatri 108 or only 28 times.

The celebrant then says : — “The goddess Gayatri resides on a lofty peak on the summit of mount **Meru** (whose base is deeply fixed) in the earth. Oh ! thou goddess, take leave from the Brahmans (who have worshipped thee, and been blessed with thy grace), and go back to thy abode as comfortably as possible.”



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The Sandhya service is closed with the following prayer to the rising sun :—" We sing the adorable glory of the sun god, who sustains all men (by causing rain) ; which glory is eternal, and most worthy of being adored with wonder. The sun, well knowing the inclinations of men, directs them to their several pursuits. The sun upholds both heaven and earth ; the sun observes all creatures (and their actions) without ever winking. To this eternal being we offer the oblation mixed with ghi. Oh ! sun, may that man who through such sacrifice offers oblations to thee become endowed with wealth and plenty. He who is under thy protection is not cut off by untimely death ; he is not vanquished by anybody, and sin has no hold on this man either from near or from afar."

In the evening, the following prayer to **Varuna** is substituted:—"Hear, Oh! Varuna, this prayer of mine. Be gracious unto me this day. Longing for thy protection, I cry to thee. Adoring thee with prayer, I beg long life of thee. The sacrificer



does the same with the oblations he offers thee. Therefore, Oh ! Varuna, without indifference in this matter, take my prayer into your kind consideration, and do not cut off our life. Oh ! Lord Varuna, whatever law of thine we, as men, violate day after day, forgive us these trespasses. Oh ! Lord Varuna, whatever offence we, as men, have committed against divine beings, whatever work of thine we have neglected through ignorance, do not destroy us, Oh ! Lord, for such sin. Whatever sin is attributed to us by our enemies, as by gamblers at dice, whatever sins we may have really committed, and what we may have done without knowing, do thou scatter and destroy all these sins. Then, Oh ! Lord, we shall become beloved of thee."

The Sandhya prayer closes with the **Abhivadhana** or salutation, which has been given in the account of marriage. After the Sandhya service in the morning, the Brahma yagna, or worship of the Supreme Being as





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represented in the sacred books is gone through. The first hymn of the **Rig Veda** is recited in detail, and then follow the first words of the **Yajur Veda**, **Sama Veda**, **Atharvana Veda**, the **Nirukta**, etc.

The next item is the **Tarpana** ceremony, or offering of water to the Devatas, Rishis, and **Pitris**. The sacred thread is placed over the left shoulder and under the right arm (**upavita**), and water is taken in the right hand, and poured as an offering to the Devatas. Then, with the sacred thread round the neck like a necklace (**niviti**), the worshipper pours water for the Rishis. Lastly, the sacred thread is placed over the right shoulder (**prachina vithi**) and water is poured for the Pitris (ancestors).

The various ceremonies described so far should be performed by all the male members of a family, whereas the daily **Devatarchana** or **Devata puja** is generally done by any one member of a family. The gods worshipped by pious Brahmans are Siva and Vishnu, and their



consorts **Parvati** and **Lakshmi**.

Homage is paid thereto through images, **salagrama** stones, or stone **lingams**. In the house of a Brahman, a corner or special room is set apart for the worship of the god. Some families keep their gods in a small **almirah** (chest).

**Smarthas** use in their domestic worship five stones, viz. : —

1. Salagrama, representing Vishnu.
2. Bana linga, a white stone representing the essence of Siva.
3. A red stone (jasper), representing Ganesha.
4. A bit of metallic ore, representing Parvathi, or a lingam representing Siva and Parvathi.
5. A piece of pebble or crystal, to represent the sun.

Smarthas commence their worship by invoking the aid of **Vigneswara** (Ganesha).



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Then, placing a vessel (**kalasa**) filled with water, they utter the following prayer. "In the mouth of the water-vessel abideth Vishnu, in its lower part is Brahma, while the whole company of the mothers (**matris**) are congregated in its middle part. Oh ! Ganges, Yamuna, Godavari, Sarasvati, Narmada, Sindhu, and Kaveri, be present in this water."

The conch or chank shell (*Turbinella rapa*) is then worshipped as follows: — "Oh! conch shell, thou wast produced in the sea, and art held by Vishnu in his hand. Thou art worshipped by all the gods. Receive my homage."

The bell is then worshipped with the prayer :—" Oh ! bell, make a sound for the approach of the gods, and for the departure of the demons. Homage to the goddess Ghanta (bell). I offer perfumes, grains of rice, and flowers, in token of rendering all due homage to the bell."

The worshipper claps his hands, and rings the bell. All the tulsi (sacred basil, *Ocimum sanctum*) leaves, flowers, sandal paste, etc.,





used for worship on the previous day, are removed.

"The tulsi is the most sacred plant in the Hindu religion; it is consequently found in or near almost every Hindu house throughout India. Hindu poets say that it protects from misfortune, and sanctifies and guides to heaven all who cultivate it. The Brahmins hold it sacred to the gods Krishna and Vishnu. The story goes that this plant is the transformed nymph **Tulasi**, beloved of Krishna, and for this reason near every Hindu house it is cultivated in pots, or in brick or earthen pillars with hollows at the top (**brindavanam** or brinda forest), in which earth is deposited. It is daily watered, and worshipped by all the members of the family. Under favourable circumstances, it grows to a considerable size, and furnishes a woody stem large enough to make beads for the rosaries used by Hindus, on which they count the number of recitations of their deity's name." \*



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\* Watt, Diet. Economic Products of India,

Writing in the seventeenth century, Vincenzo Maria\* observes that " almost all the Hindus . . . adore a plant like our *Basilico gentile*, but of a more pungent odour . . . Every one before his house has a little altar, girt with a wall half an ell high, in the middle of which they erect certain pedestals like little towers, and in these the shrub is grown. They recite their prayers daily before it, with repeated prostrations, sprinklings of water, etc. There are also many of these maintained at the bathing-places, and in the courts of the pagodas."

\* Viaggio all' Indie orientali, 1672.

The legend, accounting for the sanctity of the tulsi, is told in the *Padma Purana*\*. From the union of the lightning that flashed from the third eye of Siva with the ocean, a boy was born, whom *Brahmadev* caught up, and to whom he gave the name of *Jalandhar*. And to



him Brahmadev gave the boon that by no hand but Siva's could he perish.

\* See Note on the Tulsi Plant. Journ. Anthropol. Soc, Bombay, VIII, I, 1907.

Jalandhar grew up strong and tall, and conquered the kings of the earth, and, in due time, married **Vrinda** (or Brinda), the daughter of the demon **Kalnemi**. **Naradmuni**, the son of Brahmadev, stirred up hatred against Siva in Jalandhar, and they fought each other on the slopes of Kailas. But even Siva could not prevail against Jalandhar, so long as **his wife Vrinda remained chaste**.

So Vishnu, who had lived with her and Jalandhar, and had learnt their secret, plotted her downfall. One day, when she, sad at Jalandhar's absence, had left her garden to walk in the waste beyond, two demons met her and pursued her. She ran, with the demons following, until she saw a Rishi, at whose feet she fell and asked for shelter. The Rishi, with





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his magic, burnt up the demons into thin ash. Vrinda then asked for news of her husband. At once, two apes laid before her Jalandhar's head, feet, and hands. Vrinda, thinking that he was dead, begged the Rishi to restore him to her. The Rishi said that he would try, and in a moment he and the corpse had disappeared, and Jalandhar stood by her. She threw herself into his arms, and they embraced each other. But, some days later, she learnt that he with whom she was living was not her husband, but Vishnu, who had taken his shape. She cursed Vishnu, and foretold that, in a later Avatar, the two demons who had frightened her would rob him of his wife ; and that, to recover her, he would have to ask the aid of the apes who had brought Jalandhar's head, feet, and hands.

Vrinda then threw herself into a burning pit, and Jalandhar, once Vrinda's chastity had gone, fell a prey to Siva's thunderbolts. Then the gods came forth from their hiding place, and garlanded Siva. The demons were driven



back to hell, and men once more passed under the tyranny of the gods. But Vishnu came not back from Vrinda's palace, and those who sought him found him mad from grief, rolling in her ashes. Then Parvati, to break the charm of Vrinda's beauty, planted in her ashes three seeds. And they grew into three plants, the **tulsi**, the **avali**, and the **malti**. By the growth of these seeds, Vishnu was released from Vrinda's charm. Therefore he loved them all, but chiefly the tulsi plant, which, as he said, was Vrinda's very self.

In the seventh incarnation, the two demons, who had frightened Vrindan, became **Ravan** and his brother **Kumbhakarna**, and they bore away Sita to Lanka. To recover her, Ramchandra had to implore the help of the two apes who had brought her Jalandhar's head and hands, and in this incarnation they became **Hanuman** and his warriors.

But, in the eighth incarnation, which was that of Krishna, the tulsi plant took the form of a



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woman **Radha**, and wedded the gay and warlike lord of Dwarka.

The Shodasopachara, or sixteen acts of homage, are next performed in due order, viz.

1. Avahana, or invocation of the gods.
2. Asanam, or seat.
3. Padhya, or water for washing the feet.
4. Arghya, or oblation of rice or water.
5. Achamanam, or water for sipping.
6. Snanam, or the bath.
7. Vastra, or clothing of tulsi leaves.
8. Upavastra, or upper clothing of tulsi leaves,
- g. Gandha, or sandal paste.
10. Pushpa, or flowers.
11. 12. Dhupa and Dhipa, or incense and light.
13. Naivedya, or offering of food.
14. Pradakshina, or circumambulation.
15. Mantrapushpa, or throwing flowers.





16. Namaskara, or salutation by prostration.

While the five stones already referred to are bathed by pouring water from a conch shell, the **Purusha Suktha**, or hymn of the Rig Veda, is repeated.

This runs as follows :—

*"Purusha has thousands of heads, thousands of arms, thousands of eyes, and thousands of feet. On every side enveloping the earth, he transcended this mere space of ten fingers. Purusha himself is this whole (universe) ; whatever has been, and whatever shall be. He is also the lord of immortality, since through food he expands. Such is his greatness, and Purusha is superior to this. All existing things are a quarter of him, and that which is immortal in the sky is three quarters of him. With three quarters Purusha mounted upwards.*

*“A quarter of him was again produced below. He then became diffused everywhere among things, animate and inanimate. From him **Viraj***



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*was born, and from Viraj **Purusha**. As soon as born, he extended beyond the earth, both behind and before. When the gods offered up Purusha as a sacrifice, the spring was its clarified butter (ghi), summer its fuel, and the autumn the oblation. This victim, Purusha born in the beginning, they consecrated on the sacrificial grass. With him as their offering, the Gods, **Sadhyas**, and Rishis sacrificed.*

*“From that universal oblations were produced curds and clarified butter. He, Purusha, formed the animals which are subject to the power of the air (**Vayavya**), both wild and tame. From that universal sacrifice sprang the hymns called **Rik** and **Saman**, the Metres, and the Yajus. From it were produced horses, and all animals with two rows of teeth, cows, goats, and sheep.*

*“When they divided Purusha, into how many parts did they distribute him ? What was his mouth? What were his arms? What were called his thighs and feet ? The **Brahman** was his mouth ; the **Rajanya** became his arms ; the*



*Vaisya* was his thighs ; the *Sudra* sprang from his feet. The moon was produced from his soul ; the sun from his eye ; Indra and Agni from his mouth ; Vayu from his breath. From his navel came the atmosphere ; from his head arose the sky ; from his feet came the earth ; from his ears the four quarters ; so they formed the worlds. When the gods, in performing their sacrifice, bound Purusha as a victim, there were seven pieces of wood laid for him round the fire, and thrice seven pieces of fuel employed. With sacrifice the gods worshipped the sacrifice. These were the primæval rites. These great beings attained to the heaven, where the Gods, the ancient *Sadhyas*, reside."

Some Smarthas, e.g., the *Brahacharnams*, are more Saivite than other sections of Tamil-speaking Brahmans. During worship, they wear round the neck rudraksha (*Elæocarpis Ganitrus*) beads, and place on their head a *lingam* made thereof. In connection with the rudraksha, the legend runs that Siva or *Kalagni*





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**Rudra**, while engaged in **Tripura Samhara**, opened his third eye, which led to the destruction of the three cities, of which **Rakshasas** or Asuras had taken the form.

From this eye liquid is said to have trickled on the ground, and from this arose the **rudraksha** tree. The mere mention of the word rudraksha is believed to secure religious merit, which may be said to be equivalent to the merit obtained by the gift of ten cows to Brahmans.

Rudraksha beads are valued according to the number of lobes (or faces, as they are called), which are ordinarily five in number. A bead with six lobes is said to be very good, and one with two lobes, called **Gauri Sankara rudraksha**, is specially valued. Dikshitar Brahmans, and Pandaram priests of the higher order, wear a two-lobed bead mounted in gold.



SMARTHA BRAHMAN (BRAHACHARNAM) DOING SIVA WORSHIP.

In a manuscript entitled **Rudrakshopanishad**, it is stated that a good rudraksha bead, **when rubbed**



with water, should colour the water yellow. The Madhvas worship in the same way as Smarthas, but the objects of worship are the **salagrama** stone, and images of Hanuman and **Adi Sesha**. Food offered to Adi Sesha, Lakshmi, and Hanuman, is not eaten, but thrown away.

The Madhvas attach great importance to their spiritual guru, who is first worshipped by a worshipper. Some keep a **brindavanam**, representing the grave of their guru, along with a salagrama stone, which is worshipped at the close of the Devata puja.

Sri Vaishnavas keep for domestic worship only salagrama stones. Like the Madhvas, they are scrupulous as to the worship of their gurus (**acharyas**), without whose intervention they believe that they cannot obtain beatitude. Hence Sri Vaishnavites insist upon the **Samasrayanam** ceremony.

After the Sandhya service and Brahma yagna, the guru is worshipped. All orthodox Vaishnavas keep with them a silk cloth bearing



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the impressions of the feet of their Acharya, an **abhayastha** or impression of the hand of Vishnu in sandal paste, a few necklaces of silk thread (**pavitram**), and a bit of the bark of the tamarind tree growing at the temple at **Alvartirunagiri** in the Tinnevely district.

The worshipper puts on his head the silk cloth, and round his neck the silk necklaces, and, if available, a necklace of **Nelumbium** (sacred lotus) seeds. After saluting the abhayastha by pressing it to his eyes, he repeats the prayer of his Acharya, and proceeds to the Devatarchana, which consists in the performance of the sixteen **upacharas** already described. The salagrama stone is bathed, and the Purusha Suktha repeated.

The daily observances are brought to a close by the performance of the Vaisvadeva ceremony, or offering to Vaisvadevas (all the gods). This consists in offering cooked rice, etc., to all the gods. Some regard this as a sort of expiatory ceremony, to wipe out the sin which





may have accidentally been committed by killing small animals in the process of cooking food.

The male members of a family take their meals apart from the females. The food is served on platters made of the leaves of the banyan (*Ficics bengalensis*), *Butea frondosa*, *Bauhinia*, or plantain. Amongst Smarthas and Madhvas, various vegetable preparations are served first, and rice last, whereas, amongst the Sri Vaishnavas, especially **Vadagalais**, rice is served first.

Before commencing to eat, a little water (**tirtham**), in which a salagrama stone has been bathed, is poured into the palms of those who are about to partake of the meal. They drink the water simultaneously, saying—**"Amartapastaranamasi."** They then put a few handfuls of rice into their mouths, repeating some mantras — **"Pranayasvaha, Udanayasvaha, Somanayasvaha,"** etc.

At the end of the meal, all are served with a little water, which they sip, saying



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"**Amartapithanamasi**." They then rise together.

In connection with the salagrama stone, which has been referred to several times, the following interesting account thereof\* may be quoted :—" Salagrams are fossil cephalopods (ammonites), and are found chiefly in the bed of the **Gandak** river, a mountain torrent which, rising in the lofty mountains of Nepal, flows into the Ganges at Salagrami, a village from which they take their name, and which is not far from the sacred city of Benares. In appearance they are small black shiny pebbles of various shapes, usually round or oval, with a peculiar natural hole in them. They have certain marks to be described later, and are often flecked and inlaid with gold [or pyrites]. The name salagram is of Sanskrit derivation, from **sara chakra**, the weapon of Vishnu, and **grava**, a stone ; the chakra or chakram being represented on the stone by queer spiral lines, popularly believed to be engraved thereon at the request of Vishnu by the creator Brahma, who, in the form of a



worm, bores the holes known as **vadanas**, and traces the spiral coil that gives the stone its name.

\* Madras Mail, 1906.

“There is a curious legend connected with their origin. In ancient times there lived a certain dancing-girl, the most beautiful that had ever been created, so beautiful indeed that it was impossible to find a suitable consort for her. The girl, in despair at her loveliness, hid herself in the mountains, in the far away Himalayas, and there spent several years in prayer, till at last Vishnu appeared before her, and asked what she wanted. She begged him to tell her how it was that the great creator Brahma, **who had made her so beautiful**, had not created a male consort for her of similar perfect form. Then she looked on Vishnu, and asked the god to kiss her. Vishnu could not comply with her request as she was a dancing-girl, and of low caste, but promised by his virtue that she should be





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reincarnated in the Himalayas in the form of a river, which should bear the name Gandaki, and that he would be in the river as her eternal consort in the shape of a salagram. Thereupon the river Gandaki rose from the Himalayas, and salagrams were found in it.

“How the true virtue of the salagram was discovered is another strange little fable. A poor boy of the Kshatriya or warrior class once found one when playing by the river side. He soon discovered that when he had it in his hand, or secreted in his mouth, or about his person, his luck was so extraordinary at marbles or whatever game he played, that he always won. At last he so excelled in all he undertook that he rose to be a great king. Finally Vishnu himself came to fetch him, and bore him away in a cloud.

“The mystic river Gandaki is within the jurisdiction of the Maharaja of Nepal, and is zealously guarded on both banks, while the four special places where the sacred stones are



mostly picked up are leased out under certain conditions, the most important being that all true salagrams found are to be submitted to the Maharaja. These are then tested, the selected ones retained, and the others returned to the lessee.

“The first test of the salagrams to prove if they are genuine is very simple, but later they are put through other ordeals to try their supernatural powers. Each stone, as it is discovered, is struck on all sides with a small hammer, or, in some cases, is merely knocked with the finger. This causes the soft powdery part, produced by the boring of the worm, to fall in and disclose the vadana or hole, which may, in the more valuable salagrams, contain gold or a precious gem.

“In addition to the real stone with chakram and vadana formed by natural causes, there are found in many mountain streams round black pebbles resembling the true salagram in colour, shape, and size, but lacking the chakram and



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vadana. These are collected by **Bairagis**, or holy mendicants, who bore imitation vadanas in them, and, tracing false chakrams in **balapa** or slate stone, paste them on the pebbles. So skilfully is this fraud perpetrated that it is only after years of use and perpetual washing at the daily puja that in time the tracery wears away, and detection becomes possible.

“There are over eighteen known and different kinds of true salagrams, the initial value of which varies according to the shape and markings of the stone. The price of any one salagram may be so enhanced after the further tests have been applied, that even a lakh of rupees (Rs. 1,00,000) will fail to purchase it ; and, should experience prove the stone a lucky one, nothing will, as a rule, induce the fortunate owner to part with it.

“The three shapes of salagrams most highly prized are known as the **Vishnu salagram**, the **Lakshmi Narasimha salagram**, and the **Mutchya Murti salagram**. The first has a chakram on it





the shape of a garland, and bears marks known as the **shenka** (conch) **gada padma**, or the weapons of Vishnu, and is peculiar to that god.

“The second has two chakrams on the left of the vadana, and has dots or specks all over it. This stone, if properly worshipped, is believed to ensure to its owner prosperity and eternal life.

The third, the Mutchya Murti, is a long-shaped Hat stone with a vadana that gives it a resemblance to the face of a **fish**. It bears two chakrams, one inside and one outside the vadana, and also has specks and dots on it in the shape of a shoe. There are four or five varieties of this species, and it also, if duly worshipped, will infallibly enrich its possessor.

“One salagram there is which has no vadana, and is known as the **ugra chakra salagram**. It is quite round with two chakrams, but it is not a particularly safe one to possess, and is described as a 'furious salagrama,' for, if not worshipped with sufficient ardour, it will resent the neglect, and ruin the owner.



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“The first thing to do on obtaining a salagram is to find out whether or not it is a lucky stone, for a stone that will bring luck to one owner may mean ruin for another.

“The tests are various; a favourite one is to place the salagram with its exact weight of rice together in one place for the night. If the rice has increased in the morning (and, in some cases, my informant assures me, it will be found to have doubled in quantity), then the stone is one to be regarded by its lucky holder as priceless, and on no account to be parted with.

“If, on the other hand, the rice measures the same, or—dreadful omen—has even become less, then let the house be rid of it as early as possible. If no purchaser can be found, make a virtue of necessity, and send it as a present to the nearest temple or mutt (religious institution), where the Gurus know how to appease the wrath of the Deity with daily offerings of fruits and flowers.

“A salagram will never bring any luck if its



possession is acquired by fraud or force. The story runs that once a Brahman, finding one with a Mohomedan butcher, obtained it by theft. The luckless man speedily rued the day of his time, for, from that time onwards, nothing prospered, and he ended his days a destitute pauper.

“Again, possession of them without worship is believed by all Hindus to be most unlucky, and, as none but Brahmans can perform the worship, none but Brahmans will retain the stones in their keeping. For an orthodox Brahman household, the ownership of three or more stones is an absolute necessity. These must be duly worshipped and washed with water, and the water drunk as **tirtha**, and sacrifice of boiled rice and other food must be daily performed. When this is done, speedy success in all the business of life will fall to the lot of the inmates of the house, but otherwise ruin and disgrace await them.”

In some temples, the **Mula Vighraha**, or idol





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fixed in the inner sanctuary, is decorated with a necklace of salagrama stones. For example, at Tirupati the god is thus decorated.

The following incident in connection with a salagrama stone is narrated by Yule and Burnell \* :—"In May, 1883, a salagrama was the ostensible cause of great popular excitement among the Hindus of Calcutta. During the proceedings in a family suit before the High Court, a question arose regarding the identity of a salagrama, regarded as a household god. Counsel on both sides suggested that the thing should be brought into court. Mr. Justice Morris hesitated to give this order till he had taken advice. The attorneys on both sides, Hindus, said there could be no objection; the Court interpreter, a high-caste Brahman, said it could not be brought into Court because of the coir matting, Hobson-Jobson, but it might with perfect propriety be brought into the corridor for inspection ; which was done. This took place during the excitement about the Ilbert Bill, giving



natives magisterial authority in the provinces over Europeans ; and there followed most violent and offensive articles in several native newspapers reviling Mr. Justice Morris, who was believed to be hostile to the Bill. The Editor of the Bengallee newspaper, an educated man, and formerly a member of the Covenanted Civil Service, the author of one of the most unscrupulous and violent articles, was summoned for contempt of court. He made an apology and complete retraction, but was sentenced to two months' imprisonment."

The sacred chank, conch, or sankhu, which has been referred to in connection with ceremonial observance, is the shell of the gastropod mollusc *Turbinella rapa*. This is secured, in Southern India, by divers from Tuticorin in the vicinity of the pearl banks. The chank shell, which one sees suspended on the forehead and round the neck of bullocks, is not only used by Hindus for offering libations, and as a musical instrument in temples, but is also



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cut into armlets, bracelets, and other ornaments.

Writing in the sixteenth century, Garcia says:—"This chanco is a ware for the Bengal trade, and formerly produced more profit than now . . . . and there was formerly a custom in Bengal that no virgin in honour and esteem could be corrupted unless it were by placing bracelets of chanco on her arms ; but, since the Patans came in, this usage has more or less ceased."

"The conch shell," Captain C. R. Day writes,\* "is not in secular use as a musical instrument, but is found in every temple, and is sounded during religious ceremonies, in processions, and before the shrines of Hindu deities. In Southern India, the sankhu is employed in the ministration of a class of temple servers called Dasari. No tune, so to speak, can of course be played upon it, but still the tone is capable of much modulation by the lips, and its clear mellow notes are not without a certain charm. A





rather striking effect is produced when it is used in the temple ritual as a sort of rhythmical accompaniment, when it plays the part of **kannagolu** or **talavinyasa**."

\* Music and Musical Instruments of Southern India and the Deccan

In a petition from two natives of the city of Madras in 1734, in connection with the expenses for erecting a town called **Chintadrepettah**, the following occurs\* :—"Expended towards digging a foundation, where chanks was buried with accustomary ceremonies."

\* Oriental Commerce

A right-handed chank (i.e., one which has its spiral opening to the right), which was found off the coast of Ceylon at Jaffna in 1887, was sold for Rs. 700. Such a chank is said to have been sometimes priced at a lakh of rupees ; and, writing in 1813, Milburn says\* that a chank



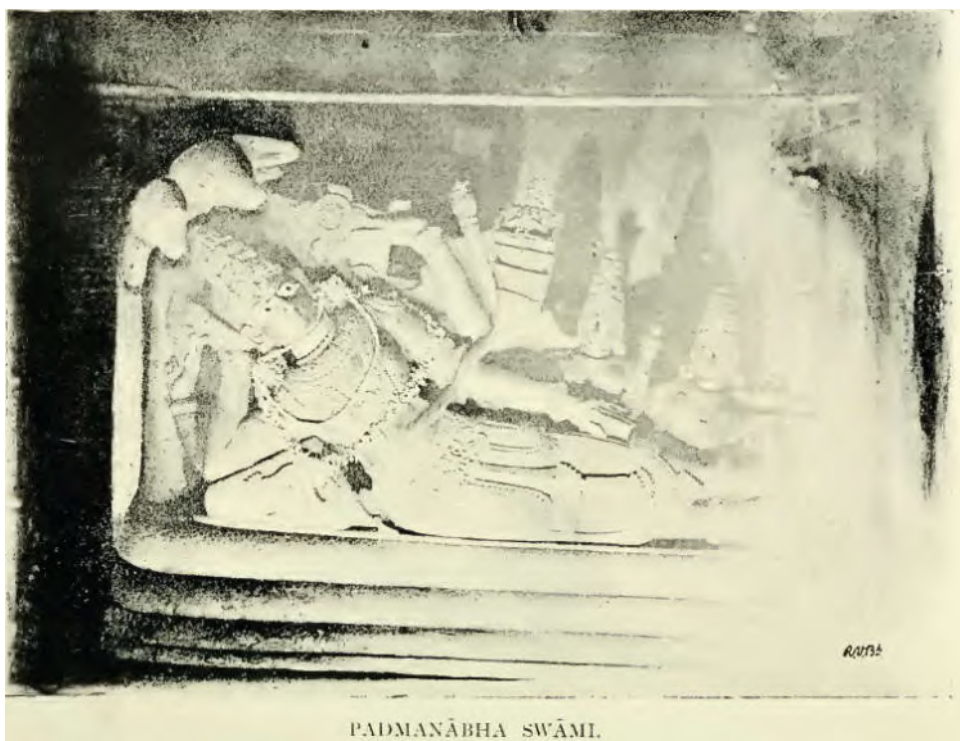
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opening to the right hand is greatly valued, and always sells for its weight in gold.

\* Oriental Commerce

Further, **Baldseus** narrates the legend that **Garroude** flew in all haste to Brahma, and brought to Kistna the **chianko** or **kinkhorn** twisted to the right. The chank appears as a



symbol on coins of the Chalukyan and Pandyan dynasties of Southern India, and on the modern coins of the Maharajas of

Travancore.

Temple worship is entirely based on **Agamas**. As Brahmans take part only in the worship of Siva and Vishnu, temples dedicated to these gods are largely frequented by them. The duties connected with the actual worship of the idol are carried out by **Gurukkals** in Siva temples, and by **Pancharatra** or **Vaikhanasa Archakas** in



Vishnu temples. The cooking of the food for the daily offering is done by Brahmans called Parcharakas. At the time of worship, some Brahmans, called **Adhyapakas**, recite the Vedas. Some stanzas from **Thiruvaimozhi** or **Thevaram** are also repeated, the former by Brahmans at Vishnu temples, and the latter by **Pandarams** (**Oduvar**) at Siva temples.

In a typical temple there are usually two idols, one of stone (**mula vigraha**) and the other of metal (**utsava vigraha**).

The mula vigraha is permanently fixed within the inner shrine or garbagraha, and the utsava vigraha is intended to be carried in procession. The mula vigrahas of Vishnu temples are generally in human form, either in a standing posture, or, as in the case of **Ranganatha**, **Padmanabha**, and **Govindarajaswami**, in a reclining posture, on **Adishesha**.

Ordinarily, three idols constitute the mula vigraha. These are Vishnu, Sridevi (Lakshmi), and Bhudevi (earth goddess). In temples





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dedicated to Sri Rama, **Lakshmana** is found instead of Bhudevi.

Sridevi and Bhudevi are also associated with Vishnu in the utsava vigraha.

In all the larger temples, there is a separate building in the temple precincts dedicated to Lakshmi, and within the **garbagraha** thereof, called **thayar** or **nachiyar sannadhi**, is a mula vigraha of Lakshmi.



TELEGU BRAHMAN WITH RUDRAKSHA COAT.

There may also be one or more shrines dedicated to the Alvars (Vaishnava saints) and the **Acharyas** —Desikar and Manavala Mahamunigal. The sect

mark is put on the faces of the mula and utsava vigrahas.

The mula vigraha in Siva temples is a **lingam** (phallic emblem). In Siva temples, there is within the garbagraha only one lamp burning, which emits a very feeble light. Hence arise the common sayings "As dim as the light burning in



Siva's temple," or " Like the lamp in Siva's temple."

The utsava vigraha is in the human forms of Siva and Parvathi. In all important Saivite temples, Parvathi is housed in a separate building, as Lakshmi is in Vishnu temples. Vigneswara, Subramanya, and the important **Nayanmars** also have separate shrines in the temple precincts.

So far as ordinary daily worship is concerned, there is not much difference in the mode of worship between temple and domestic worship. Every item is done on a large scale, and certain special Agamic or Tantric rites are added to the sixteen **Upacharas** already mentioned.

At the present time, there are, especially in the case of Vishnu temples, two forms of temple worship, called **Pancharatra** and **Vaikhanasa**.

In the former, which is like domestic worship in all essential points, any Brahman may officiate as temple priest. In the latter, only



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**Vaikhanasa Archakas** may officiate.

All big temples are generally well endowed, and some temples receive from Government annual grants of money, called **tasdik**. The management of the temple affairs rests with the **Dharmakarthas** (trustees), who practically have absolute control over the temple funds. All the temple servants, such as Archakas, **Parcharakas**, and Adhyapakas, and the non-Brahman servants (sweepers, flower-gatherers, musicians and dancing-girls) are subject to the authority of the Dharmakarthas.

For their services in the temple, these people are paid partly in money, and partly in kind. The cooked food, which is offered daily to the god, is distributed among the temple servants. On ordinary days, the offerings of cooked food made by the Archakas, and the fruits brought by those who come to worship, are offered only to the **mula vigraha**, whereas, on festival days, they are offered to the utsava vigrahas.

For worship in Vishnu temples, flowers and





tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*) are used. In Siva temples, bilva (bael : *Ægle Marmelos*) leaves are substituted for tulsi. At the close of the worship, the Archaka gives to those present *thirtham* (holy water), tulsi or bilva leaves, and vibhuthi (sacred ashes) according to the nature of the temple.

At Vishnu temples, immediately after the giving of *thirtham*, an inverted bowl, bearing on it the feet of Vishnu (*satari* or *sadagopam*) is placed by the Archaka first on the head, and then on the right shoulder, and again on the head, in the case of grown up and married males, and only on the head in the case of females and young people.

The bowl is always kept near the mula *vigraha*, and, on festival days, when the god is taken in procession through the streets, it is carried along with the *utsava vigraha*. On festival days, such as **Dhipavali**, **Vaikunta Ekadasi**, **Dwadasi**, etc., the god of the temple is taken in procession through the main streets of



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the town or village.

The idol, thus borne in procession, is not the stone figure, but the portable one made of metal (utsava vighraha), which is usually kept in the temple in front of the Mula idol. At almost every important temple, an annual festival called **Brahmotsavam**, which usually lasts ten days, is celebrated. Every night during this festival, the god is seated on the clay, wooden or metal figure of some animal as a vehicle, e.g., Garuda, horse, elephant, bull, Hanuman, peacock, **yali**, etc., and taken in procession, accompanied by a crowd of Brahmans chanting the Vedas and Tamil **Nalayara Prapandhams**, if the temple is an important one.

Of the vehicles or **vahanams**, Hanuman and Garuda are special to Vishnu, and the bull (Nandi) and tiger to Siva. The others are common to both deities. During the month of May, the festival of the god **Varadaraja** takes place annually.

On one of the ten days of this festival, the



idol, which has gone through a regular marriage ceremony, is placed on an elaborately decorated car (ratha), and dragged through the main streets. The car frequently bears a number of carved images of a very obscene nature, the object of which, it is said, is to avert the evil eye.

Various castes, besides Brahmans, take part in temple worship, at which the saints of both Siva and Vishnu—Nayanmar and Alvars—are worshipped.

The Brahmans do not entirely ignore the worship of the lower deities, such as **Mariamman**, **Muneswara**, **Kodamanitaya**. etc.

At Udipi in South Canara, the centre of the Madhva cult, where Madhva preached his **Dvaitic** philosophy, and where there are several mutts presided over by celibate priests, the Brahmans often make a vow to the Bhuthas (devils) of the Paravas and Nalkes.

Quite recently, we saw an orthodox **Shivalli** Brahman, employed under the priest of one of





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the Udipi mutts, celebrating the **nema** (festival) of a bhutha named **Panjurli**, in fulfilment of a vow made when his son was ill. The Nalke devil-dancers were sent for, and the dance took place in the courtyard of the Brahman's house.

During the leaf festival at Periyapalayam near Madras, Brahman males and females may be seen wearing leafy twigs of margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*), and going round the Mariamma shrine.

I pass on to a detailed consideration of the various classes of Brahmans met with in Southern India. Of these, the Tamil Brahmans, or Dravidas proper, are most numerous in the southern districts. They are divided into the following sections :

<i>I. Smartha.</i>	
(a) Vadama.	(c) Brahacharnam.
(b) Kēsīgal.	(d) Vathima or Madhema.
<i>I. Smartha—cont.</i>	
(e) Ashtasahasram.	(i) Kāniyalai.
(f) Dīkshitar.	(j) Sankēthi.
(g) Shōliar.	(k) Prathamāsāki.
(h) Mukkāni.	(l) Gurukkal.
<i>II. Vaishnava.</i>	
A. Vadagalai (northerners).	B. Thengalai (southerners).
(a) Sri Vaishnava.	(a) Sri Vaishnava.
(b) Vaikhānasa.	(b) Vaikhānasa.
(c) Pāncharatra.	(c) Pāncharatra.
(d) Hebbar.	(d) Hebbar.
	(e) Mandya.



*I. Smartka*—(a) **Vadama**.—The Vadamas claim to be superior to the other classes, but will dine with all the sections, except Gurukkals and **Prathamasakis**, and, in some places, will even eat with Prathamasakis. The sub-divisions among the Vadamas are :—

1. Choladesa (Chola country).
2. Vadadesa (north country).
3. Savayar or Sabhayar.
4. Inji.
5. Thummagunta Dravida.

All these are Smarthas, who use as their sect mark either the **urdhvapundram** (straight mark made with sandal paste) or the circular mark, and rarely the cross lines. They worship both Siva and Vishnu, and generally read Puranas about Vishnu.

Some Vadamas use the Vaishnava namam as their sect mark, and are called **Kiththunamakkarar**. They follow the Smartha customs in every way. There is a common



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saying "**Vadamam muththi Vaishnavam**," i.e., a Vadama ripens into a Vaishnava. This is literally true.

Some Vadama families, who put on the urdhvapundram mark, and follow the Smartha customs, observe pollution whenever a death occurs in certain Sri Vaishnava families. This is because the Sri Vaishnavas are Vadamas recently converted into Vaishnava families.

(b) **Kesigal**.—The Kesigals, or Hiranyakesikal (men of the silvery hair), as they are sometimes called, closely resemble the Vadamas, but are an exclusive endogamous unit, and highly conservative and orthodox. They are called Hiranyakesikal or *Hiranyakesis* because they follow the **Grihya Sutras** of **Hiranyakesi**. It is noted, in the Gazetteer of the Tanjore district, that they “are peculiar in all having one common Sutram called the **Sathyashada** after a common ancestor.”

(c) **Brahacharnam** (the great sect).—The Brahacharnams are more Saivite, and more





orthodox than the Vadamas. They put on **vibhuti** (sacred ashes) and sandal paste horizontal lines as their sect mark.

The sub-division **Sathyamangalam Brahacharnam** seems, however, to be an exception, as some members thereof put on the Vaishnavite sect mark at all times, or at least during the month of **Purattasi**, which is considered sacred to the god Venkataramana of Tirupati.

The more orthodox Brahacharnams wear a single rudraksha bead, or a necklace of beads, and some make lingams out of these beads, which they put on the head during worship. They generally worship five gods, viz., Siva in the form of a lingam, **spatika** (crystal) lingam, Vishnu, Ganesa, and Iswara.

It is said that Brahacharnam women can be distinguished by the mode of tying the cloth, which is not worn so as to reach to the feet, but reaches only to just below the knees. The



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Brahacharnams are sub-divided into the following sections :

1. Kandramanicka.
2. Milaganur.
3. Mangudi.
4. Palavaneri or Pazhamaneri.
5. Musanadu.
6. Kolaththur.
7. Maruthancheri.
8. Sathyamangalam.
9. Puthur Dravida.

It is recorded, in the Gazetteer of the Tanjore district, that "one ceremony peculiar to the *Milaganur Brahacharnams* is that, before the principal marriage ceremonies of the first day, a feast is given to four married women, a widow, and a bachelor. This is called the *adrisya pendugal* (invisible women) ceremony.

It is intended to propitiate four wives belonging to this sub-division, who are said to



have been cruelly treated by their mother-in-law, and cursed the class. They are represented to have feasted a widow, and to have then disappeared."

(d) **Vathima**.—The Vathimas, or Madhimas, are most numerous in the Tanjore district, and are thus described in the Gazetteer :—"The Vattimas are grouped into three smaller subsections, of which one is called 'the eighteen village Vattimas,' from the fact that they profess (apparently with truth) to have lived till recently in only eighteen villages, all of them in this district. They have a marked character of their own, which may be briefly described. They are generally money-lenders, and consequently are unpopular with their neighbours, who are often blind to their virtues and unkind to their failings. *[There is a proverb that the Vadamas are always economical, and the Vathimas always unite together.]* It is a common reproach against them that they are severe to those who are in their debt, and parsimonious in their household





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expenditure. To this latter characteristic is attributed their general abstinence from **dholl** (the usual accompaniment of a Brahman meal), and their preference for a cold supper instead of a hot meal.

“The women work as hard as the men, making mats, selling buttermilk, and lending money on their own account, and are declared to be as keen in money-making and usury as their brothers. They, however, possess many amiable traits. They are well known for a generous hospitality on all great occasions, and no poor guest or Brahman mendicant has ever had reason to complain in their houses that he is being served worse than his richer or more influential fellows. Indeed, if anything, he fares the better for his poverty. Again, they are unusually lavish in their entertainments at marriages ; but their marriage feasts have the peculiarity that, whatever the total amount expended, a fixed proportion is always paid for the various items—so much per cent, for the



pandal, so much per cent, for food, and so on. Indeed it is asserted that a beggar who sees the size of the marriage pandal will be able to guess to a nicety the size of the present he will get. Nor, again, at their marriages, do they haggle about the marriage settlement, since they have a scale, more or less fixed and generally recognised, which determines these matters.

“There is less keen competition for husbands among them, since their young men marry at an earlier age more invariably than among the other sub-divisions. The Vattimas are clannish.

“If a man fails to pay his dues to one of them, the word is passed round, and no other man of the subdivision will ever lend his money. They sometimes unite to, light their villages by private subscription, and to see to its sanitation, and, in a number of ways, they exhibit a corporate unity.

“Till quite recently they were little touched by English education ; but a notable exception to this general statement existed in the late Sir A.



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Seshayya Sastri, who was of Vattima extraction."

The sub-divisions of the Vattimas are :

1. Pathinettu Gramaththu (eighteen villages).
2. Udayalur.
3. Nannilam.

4. Rathamangalam, According to some, this is not a separate section, but comes under the eighteen village section.

(e) **Ashtasahasram** (eight thousand).—This class is considered to be inferior to the Brahacharnams and Vadamas. The members thereof are, like the Brahacharnams, more Saivite than the Vadamas, The females are said to wear their cloth very elegantly, and with the lower border reaching so low as to cover the ankles. The sub-divisions of the Ashtasahasrams are : —

1. Aththiyur.
2. Arivarpade.
3. Nandivadi.





#### 4. Shatkulani (six families).

As their numbers are few, though the subdivisions are endogamous, intermarriage is not entirely prohibited.

(f) **Dikshitar**.—Another name for this section is **Thillai Muvayiravar**, i.e., the three thousand of Thillai (now Chidambaram). There is a tradition that three thousand people started from Benares, and, when they reached Chidambaram, they were one short. This confused them, but they were pacified when Siva explained that he was the missing individual. The Dikshitars form a limited community of only several hundred families.

The men, like Nayars and Nambutiri Brahmans of the west coast, wear the hair tuft on the front of the head. They do not give their girls in marriage to other sections of Brahmans, and they do not allow their women to leave Chidambaram. Hence arises the proverb "*A Thillai girl never crosses the boundary line.*"



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DIKSHITAR BRÄHMAN.

The Dikshitar are priests of the temple of Nataraja at Chidambaram, whereat they serve by turns. Males marry very early in life, and it is very difficult to secure a girl for marriage above the age of five. The tendency to marry when very young is due to the fact that only married persons have a voice in the management of the affairs of the temple, and an individual must be married before he can get a share of the temple income. The chief sources of income are the **pavadam** and **kattalai** (heaps of cooked rice piled up or spread on a board), which are offered to the god.

Every Dikshitar will do his best to secure clients, of whom the best are **Nattukottai Chettis**. The clients are housed and looked after by the Dikshitar.

Concerning the Dikshitar, Mr. W. Francis writes as follows\* :—"An interesting feature about the Chidambaram temple is its system of



management. It has no landed or other endowments, nor any tasdik allowance, and is the property of a class of Brahmans peculiar to the town, who are held in far more respect than the generality of the temple-priest Brahmans, are called **Dikshitar**s (those who make oblations), marry only among themselves, and in appearance somewhat resemble the **Nayars** or **Tiyans of Malabar**, bringing their topknot round to the front of their foreheads.

“Their ritual in the temple more resembles that of a domestic worship than the forms commonly followed in other large shrines. Theoretically, all the married males of the Dikshitaras have a voice in the management of the temple, and a share in its perquisites ; and at present there are some 250 of such shares. They go round the southern districts soliciting alms and offerings for themselves. Each one has his own particular clientele, and, in return for the alms received, he makes, on his return, offerings at the shrine in the name of his





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benefactors, and sends them now and again some holy ashes, or an invitation to a festival.

“Twenty of the Dikshitaras are always on duty in the temple, all the males of the community (except boys and widowers) doing the work by turns lasting twenty days each, until each one has been the round of all the different shrines. The twenty divide themselves into five parties of four each, each of which is on duty for four days at one of the five shrines at which daily puja is made, sleeps there at night, and becomes the owner of the routine offerings of food made at it.

“Large presents of food made to the temple as a whole are divided among all the Dikshitaras. The right to the other oblations is sold by auction every twenty days to one of the Dikshitaras at a meeting of the community. These periodical meetings take place in the **Deva Sabha**. A lamp from **Nataraja's** shrine is brought, and placed there by a **Pandaram**, and (to avoid even the appearance of any deviation from the principle of the absolute equality of all



Dikshitar in the management of the temple) this man acts as president of the meeting, and proposals are made impersonally through him."

\* Gazetteer of the South Arcot district.

As a class the Dikshitar are haughty, and refuse to acknowledge any of the Sankarachariars as their priests, because they are almost equal to the god Siva, who is one of them. If a **Sankarachariar** comes to the temple, he is not allowed to take sacred ashes direct from the cup, as is done at other temples to show respect to the Sanyasi.

The Dikshitar are mostly Yejur Vedis, though a few are followers of the Rig Veda. When a girl attains puberty, she goes in procession, after the purificatory bath, to every Dikshitar's house, and receives presents.

(g) Sholiar.—The Sholiar are divided into the following sections :



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(1) Thirukattiur.

(2) Madalur.

(3) Visalur.

(4) Puthalur.

(5) Senganur.

(6) Avadayar Kovil.

Concerning the Sholiars, Mr. C. Ramachendrier writes as follows\*:  
—"The Sholiars of **Thiruvanakaval** (in the Tanjore district) belong to the first sub-division, and they form a separate community, devoting their time to service in the temple. Those who make puja to the idol are **Pradhamasakis**, and are called **Archakas**. Those who serve as cooks, and attend to other inferior services, are called **Arya Nambi**, and those who decorate the idols taken in procession on festive occasions are termed **Therunabuttan**.

\* Collection of the Decisions of High Courts and the Privy Council on the Hindu Law of Marriage and the Effect of Apostacy after marriage. Madras, 1891.





“Archakas alone are entitled to decorate stone images in the chief shrines of the temple, and they are also called Pandits. According to custom, Sholia Brahmans should wear front locks, but some of them have adopted the custom of other Brahmans, while the orthodox section of the community, and the Archakas of Thiruvanakaval, speak a very low Tamil with a peculiar intonation, and they do not send their children to English schools.

“Young boys are trained by their parents in the temple service, which entitles them, even when young, to some emoluments. There are amongst them none who have received either Sanskrit or Tamil education. The Archakas perform pujas by turn, and, as the Archakaship is to be conferred at a certain age by anointment by a guru, infant marriage does not obtain among them to such an extent as among the Dikshitaras of Chidambaram.

“They eat with the other **Smartha** Brahmans, but do not intermarry. They count about 300 in



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number, including women and children. There is no intermarriage between them and the other Sholia Brahmans. Those of **Avadayarcovil** are also engaged in the service of the temple of that name.

“Sholiars of other classes are to be found in **Vasishtakudy** in the taluk of Vriddachallam, Vemmaniathur in the taluk of Villupuram, and Visalur in the taluk of Kumbaconam.”

In an article on the Sholiars, \* it is recorded that "they are a very intelligent people, and at the same time very vindictive if disturbed. Chanakya, the Indian Machiavelli and the Minister of Chandragupta, is supposed to have belonged to this caste. His hatred of the Nanda family, and the way in which he uprooted each and every member of that race, has been depicted in the famous Sanskrit drama **Mudrarakshasa**, which belongs to the 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Whether on account of his character, and under the belief that he originated from this caste, or for some reason



which is unaccountable, the Soliyas of modern days are held as very vindictive people, as the following proverb will show :—' *We do not want to meet with a Soliya even in a picture.*' "

\* Madras Mail, 1904.

Another proverb is to the effect that "the kudumi (hair tuft) on the head of a Sholiar does not shake without sufficient reason," i.e., it is a sign that he is bent upon doing some mischief.

(h) **Mukkani**.—The Mukkanis are Smarthas confined to the Cochin and Travancore States.

(i) **Kaniyalar**.—Concerning the Kaniyalars, Mr. Ramachendrier writes as follows :—" Kaniyalars form a separate class of Smartha Brahmins, and they live in the district of Tinnevely and some parts of Trichinopoly. They do not intermarry with any other class of Smartha Brahmins, but eat with them. A large number of them, though Smarthas by birth, wear a mark on their forehead like Vyshnava Brahmins, and





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serve as cooks and menial servants in the big temple at Srirangam. Their women adopt the Vyshnava women's style of wearing cloths, and to all appearance they would pass for Vyshnava women. The Vyshnava Brahmins would not allow them to mess in their houses, though they treat rice and cakes prepared by them in temples and offered to god as pure and holy, and partake of them."

(j) **Sankethi**.—The Sankethis are confined to the Mysore Province. They speak a very corrupt form of Tamil, mixed with Canarese. The following account of them is given in the Mysore Census Report, 1891.

"They are found chiefly in the Mysore and Hassan districts. Their colonies are also found in Kadur and Shimoga. Their number seems to have been somewhat understated ; many of them have probably returned themselves as Dravidas. So far as language is an indication of race, the Sanketis are Tamilians, although their dialect is more diluted with Kanarese than that



of any other Kannada ridden Tamil body.

“Theirs seems to have been among the earliest immigrations into Mysore from the neighbouring Tamil country. It is said that some 700 years ago, about 1,000 families of Smartha Brahmans emigrated from the vicinity of Kanchi (Conjeeveram), induced doubtless by contemporary politics. They set out in two batches towards Mysore. They were attacked by robbers on the road, but the larger party of about 700 families persevered in the march notwithstanding, and settled near the village of Kausika near Hassan, whence they are distinguished as **Kausika Sanketis**.

“Some twelve years afterwards, the other party of 300 families found a resting place at Bettadapura in the Hunsur taluk. This branch has been called Bettadapura Sanketi. Their religious and social customs are the same. The Kausika Sanketis occasionally take wives from the Bettadapura section, but, when the married girl joins her husband, **her connection with her**



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parents and relatives ceases altogether even in regard to meals.

“During the Coorg disturbances about the end of the last (eighteenth) century, many young women of the Sanketis were captured by the Kodagas (Coorgs), and some of the captives were subsequently recovered. Their descendants are to this day known as Sanketis of the West, or **Hiriangalas**. But they, and another sub-class called **Patnagere Sanketis**, do not in all exceed twenty families.

“The Sanketis are proverbially a hardy, intensely conservative and industrious Brahman community. They are referred to as models for simultaneously securing the twofold object of preserving the study of the Vedas, while securing a worldly competence by cultivating their gardens ; and, short of actually ploughing the land, they are pre-eminently the only fraction of the Brahman brotherhood who turn their hands to the best advantage.”

(k) **Prathamasaki**.—These follow the white





Yajur Veda, and are hence called Sukla Yajur Vedis. The white Yajus forms the first fifteen sakas of the Yajur Veda, and this is in consequence sometimes called **Prathamasaka**.

The Prathamasakis are sometimes called **Katyayana** (followers of Katyayana Sutram), Vajusaneya, and Madyandanas. The two last names occur among their Pravara and Gotra Rishis. The Prathamasakis are found among all the linguistic sections. Among Smarthas, Andhras, and Vaishnavas, they are regarded as inferior. Carnataka Prathamasakis are, on the other hand, not considered inferior by the other sections of Carnatakas.

In the Tanjore district, the Prathamasakis are said to be known as **Madyana Paraiyans**. The following quaint legend is recorded in the Gazetteer of that district :—

"The god of the Tiruvalur temple was entreated by a pujari of this place (**Koiltirumulam**) to be present in the village at a sacrifice in his (the god's) honour. The deity



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consented at length, but gave warning that he would come in a very unwelcome shape. He appeared as a Paraiyan (Pariah) with beef on his back, and followed by the four Vedas in the form of dogs, and took his part in the sacrifice thus accoutred and attended. All the Brahmans who were present ran away, and the god was so incensed that he condemned them to be Paraiyans for one hour in the day, from noon till 1 P.M., ever afterwards.

“There is a class of Brahmans called **mid-day Paraiyans**, who are found in several districts, and a colony of whom reside at Sedanipuram five miles from Nannilam. It is believed throughout the Tanjore district that the mid-day Paraiyans are the descendants of the Brahmans thus cursed by the god. They are supposed to expiate their defilement by staying outside their houses for an hour and a half every day at mid-day, and to bathe afterwards ; and, if they do this, they are much respected.

“Few of them, however, observe this rule, and



orthodox persons will not eat with them, because of their omission to remove the defilement. They call themselves the **Prathamasaka**."

Several versions of stories accounting for their pollution are extant, and the following is a version given by Mr. Ramachendrier. "**Yagnavalkiar**, who was the chief disciple of **Vysampayanar**, having returned with his students from pilgrimage, represented to his priest that Yajur Veda was unrivalled, and that he and his students alone were qualified for its propagation. Vysampayanar, feeling provoked by this assertion, which, he remarked, implied insult to Brahmans, proposed certain penance for the offence. Yagnavalkiar replied that he and his students had done many good deeds and performed many religious rites, and that they were still to do such, and that the insult imputed to them was worthy of little notice.

“Vysampayanar required Yagnavalkiar to give back the Vedas which he had taught him, which





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he threw out at once. The matter thrown out having been like cinders, Vysampayanar's disciples then present, assuming the shape of thithiri birds (fire-eating birds), swallowed them, and hence the Veda is called **Thithiriya Saka** and **Ktishna Yajus**.

“Soon after, Yagnavalkiar, without his priest's knowledge, went to the Sun, and, offering prayers, entreated him to teach him Vedas. The Sun, thereupon taking the shape of a horse, taught him the Yajur Veda, which now forms the first fifteen sakas, and he in turn taught it to his disciples **Kanvar**, **Madhyandanar**, **Katyayanar**, and **Vajasaneyar**.

“It is to be gathered from **Varaha Puranam** that Vysampayanar pronounced a curse that the Rig Veda taught by the Sun should be considered degraded, and that the Brahmans reading it should become **Chandalas** (outcastes).”

Another version of the legend runs as follows.



“Vaisampayanar used to visit the king almost every day, and bless him by giving **akshatha** or sacred rice. One day, as Vaisampayanar could not go, he gave the rice grains to his disciple Yagnavalkiar, and told him to take them to the king. Accordingly, Yagnavalkiar went to the king's palace, and found the throne empty. Being impatient by nature, he left the rice grains on the throne, and returned to his priest. The king, when he returned home, found his throne changed into gold, and certain plants were growing round his seat. On enquiry, he discovered that this marvellous effect was due to the sacred akshatha. He sent word to Vaisampayanar to send the rice grains by his disciple who had brought them. Yagnavalkiar refused, and was told to vomit the Vedas.

“Readily he vomited, and, going to the Sun, learnt the Veda from him. As the Sun is always in motion sitting in his car, the Vedas could not be learnt without mistakes and peculiar sounds. When he came to his Guru Vaisampayanar,



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Yagnavalkiar was cursed to become a Chandala. The curse was subsequently modified, as the Sun interceded on behalf of Yagnavalkiar”.

(I) GurukkaL—The Gurukkals are all followers of the **Bodhayana Sutras**. They are temple priests, and other Brahmans regard them as inferior, and will not eat with them. Even in temples, the Gurukkals sprinkle water over the food when it is offered to the god, but do not touch the food. They may not live in the same quarters with other Brahmans. No **agraharam** (Brahman quarter) will ever contain a Gurukkal's house. There should, strictly speaking, be at least a lane separating the houses of the Gurukkals from those of other Brahmans. This is, however, not rigidly observed at the present day. For example, at **Shiyali**, Gurukkals and other Brahmans live in the same street.

There are among the Gurukkals the following subdivisions : —

1. Tiruvalangad.





2. Conjeeveram.

3. Tirukkazhukunram

The Tiruvalangad Gurukkals mark their bodies with vibhuti (sacred ashes) in sixteen places, viz., head, face, neck, chest, navel, knees, two sides of the abdomen, back and hands (three places on each hand). The other two sub-divisions mark themselves in eight places, viz., head, face, neck, chest, knees and hands.

Gurukkals who wish to become priests have to go through several stages of initiation called **Dikshai** (see Pandaram).

Gurukkals are Saivites to a greater extent than the Smarthas, and do not regard themselves as disciples of Sankaracharya. Those who are orthodox, and are temple priests, should not see the corpses of Pandarams and other non-Brahman castes. The sight of such a corpse is supposed to heap sin on them, and pollute them, so that they are



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unfit for temple worship.

II. **Vaishnava**.—The Vaishnavas, or **Sri Vaishnavas**, as they are sometimes called to distinguish them from the **Madhvas**, who are also called Vaishnavas, are all converts from Smarthas, though they profess to constitute a distinct section. Some are converts from Telugu Smarthas, and are called **Andhra Vaishnavas**.

These do not mix with other Tamil-speaking Vaishnavas, and retain some of the Telugu customs. There are two distinct groups of Sri Vaishnavas—the **Vadagalais** (northerners) and **Thengalais** (southerners), who are easily distinguished by the marks on their foreheads. The Vadagalais put on a U-shaped mark, and the Thengalais a Y-shaped mark.

The white mark is made with a kind of kaolin called tiruman, and turmeric rendered red by means of alkali is used for the central streak. The turmeric, as applied by the more orthodox, is of a yellow instead of red colour.



Orthodox Sri Vaishnavas are very exclusive, and hold that they co-existed as a separate caste of Brahmans with the Smarthas. But it was only after Ramanuja's teaching that the Vaishnavas seceded from the Smarthas, and the ranks were swollen by frequent additions from amongst the Vadamas. There are some families of Vaishnavas which observe pollution when there is a death in certain Smartha families, which belong to the same gotra. Vaishnavas of some places, e.g., **Valavanur**, **Savalai**, and **Perangiyur**, in the South Arcot district, are considered low by the orthodox sections of Vaishnavas, because they are recent converts to Vaishnavism.

A good example of Smarthas becoming Vaishnavas is afforded by the **Thummagunta Dravidas**, some of whom have become Vaishnavas, but still take girls in marriage from Smartha families, but do not give their daughters in marriage to Smarthas.

All Vaishnavas are expected to undergo a





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ceremony of initiation into Vaishnavism after the Upanayanam ceremony. At the time of initiation, they are branded with the marks of the chakram and sankha (chank) on the right and left shoulders respectively. The **Vaikhanasas** and **Pancharatras** regard the branding as unnecessary. The ceremony of initiation (**samasrayanam**) is usually performed by the head of a mutt.

Sometimes, however, it is carried out by an elderly member of the family of the candidate. Such families go by the name of **Swayam Acharya Purushas** (those who have their own men as Acharyas).

For Vadagalais there are two mutts. Of these, the **Ahobila** mutt was formerly at Tiruvallur, but its head-quarters has been transferred to Narasimhapuram near Kumbakonam. The **Parakalaswami** mutt is in the Mysore Province.

For Thengalais there are three mutts, at **Vanamamalai** and **Sriperumbudur** in Chingleput, and **Tirukoilur** in South Arcot. These are called



respectively the **Tothadri**, **Ethirajahir**, and **Emberumanar** mutts. There are various points of difference between Vadagalais and Thengalais, which sometimes lead to bitter quarrels in connection with temple worship. During the procession of the god at temple festivals, both Vadagalais and Thengalais go before and after the god, repeating Sanskrit Vedas and Tamil Prapandhams respectively.

Before commencing these, certain slokas are recited, in one of which the Vadagalais use the expression **Ramanuja daya patram**, and the Thengalais the expression **Srisailesa daya patram**, and a quarrel ensues in consequence.

The main differences between the two sections are summarised as follows in the Mysore Census Report, 1891:—"The tenets which form the bone of contention between the Tengales and Vadagales are stated to number 18, and seem to cluster round a few cardinal items of controversy : —

1. Whether Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu, is



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(**Vibhu**) co-omnipresent and co-illimitable with Vishnu ;

2. Whether Lakshmi is only the mediatrix for, or the co-bestower of **moksham** or final beatitude ;

3. Whether there is any graduated moksham attainable by the good and blessed, according to their multifarious merits ;

4. Whether **prapatti**, or unconditional surrender of the soul to god, should be performed once for all, or after every act of spiritual rebellion ;

5. Whether it (prapatti) is open to all, or is prescribed only for those specially prepared and apprenticed ;

6. Whether the indivisibly atomic human soul is entered into, and permeated or not by the omnipresent creator ;

7. Whether god's mercy is exerted with or without cause ;

8. Whether the same (the divine mercy)





means the overlooking (**dhosha darsanam**) or enjoyment (**dhosha bogyatvam**) of the soul's delinquencies ;

9. Whether works (**karma**) and knowledge (**jnana**) are in themselves salvation giving, or only lead to faith (**bhakti**) by which final emancipation is attained ;

10. Whether the good of other (unregenerate) castes should be tolerated according to their graduated social statuses, or should be venerated without reference to caste inequalities ;

11. Whether karma (works, rituals, etc.) should or not be bodily and wholly abandoned by those who have adopted prapatti."

The points of difference between Vadagalais and Thengalais are thus described by Mr. V. N. Narasimmiyengar \* :—"The Tengale schismatists deny to Lakshmi, the consort of Vishnu, any participation in creation, and reduce her to the position of a creature ; omit to ring the



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bell when worshipping their idols ; salute each other and their gods only once ; make use of highly abstruse Tamil verses in room of Sanskrit mantras and prayers ; modify the sraddha ceremony materially, and do not shave their widows.

\* Ind. Ant. III, 1874.

“The principal texts cited by the Tengale Sri Vaishnavas in support of the immunity of their widows from the rite of tonsure are the following : —

“Widows should avoid, even when in affliction and danger, shaving, eating of sweets, betel nut, flowers, sexual intercourse, conversation with men, and jewels (**Sandilyah**). A woman, whether unmarried or widowed, who shaves her hair, will go to the hell called **Rauravam**. When the husband dies, the widow should perform his due obsequies without shaving. She should never shave on any occasion, or for any purpose whatever (**Sambhuh**). If any woman,



whether unmarried or widowed, shave (her head), she will dwell in the hell called Rauravam for one thousand **karors** of **kalpas**. If a widow shave (her head) by ignorance, she will cause hair to grow in the mouths of her ancestors' ghosts on both sides. If she perform any ceremonies inculcated by the Srutis and Smritis with her head shaved, she will be born a **Chandali** (Manuh).

“There is no sin in a devout widow, whose object is eternal salvation, wearing her hair. If she should shave, she will assuredly go to hell. A Vaishnava widow should never shave her head. If she do so through ignorance, her face should not be looked at (**Vridh'ha Manuh in Khagesvara Samhita**). If anyone observe a “Brahmachari beggar with his **kachche** (cloth passed between the legs, and tucked in behind), a householder without it, and a widow without hair on her head, he should at once plunge into water with his clothes (**Ananta Samhita**).





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“It is considered highly meritorious for Vaishnava widows to wear their hair, as long as they remain in this world (**Hayagriva Samhita**).”

In a note on the two sects of the Vaishnavas in the Madras Presidency, the Rev. C. E. Kennet writes as follows\*:<sup>—</sup>“While both the sects acknowledge the Sanskrit books to be authoritative, the Vadagalai uses them to a greater extent than the Thengalai. The former also recognises and acknowledges the female energy as well as the male, though not in the gross and sensual form in which it is worshipped among the Saivas, but as being the feminine aspect of deity, and representing the grace and merciful care of Providence ; while the Tenkalai excludes its agency in general, and, inconsistently enough, allows it co-operation in the final salvation of a human soul.

\* Ind. Ant. III, 1874.

“But the most curious difference between the two schools is that relating to human salvation



itself, and is a reproduction in Indian minds of the European controversy between Calvinists and Arminians. For the adherents of the Vadakalais strongly insist on the concomitancy of the human will for securing salvation, whereas those of the Tenkalai maintain the irresistability of divine grace in human salvation. The arguments from analogy used by the two parties respectively are, however, peculiarly Indian in character. The former adopt what is called the monkey argument, the **Markata Nyaya**, for the young monkey holds on to or grasps its mother to be conveyed to safety, and represents the hold of the soul on God. The latter use the cat argument, the **Marjala Nyaya**, which is expressive of the hold of God on the soul ; for the kitten is helpless until the mother-cat seizes it *nolens volens*, and secures it from danger. The late Major M. W. Carr inserts in his large collection of Telugu and Sanskrit proverbs the following : —

" The monkey and its cub. As the cub clings



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to its mother, so man seeks divine aid, and clings to his God. The doctrine of the Vadakalais.

"Like the cat and her kitten. The stronger carrying and protecting the weaker ; used to illustrate the free grace of God. The doctrine of the Tenkalais.

"Leaving the speculative differences between these two sects, I have now to mention the practical one which divides them, and which has been, and continues to be, the principal cause of the fierce contentions and long-drawn law suits between them. And this relates to the exact mode of making the sectarian mark on the forehead. While both sects wear a representation of Vishnu's trident, composed of red or yellow for the middle line or prong of the trident, and of white earth for those on each side, the followers of the Vadakalai draw the middle line only down to the bridge of the nose, but those of the Tenkalai draw it over the bridge a little way down the nose itself.





“Each party maintain that their mode of making the mark is the right one, and the only means of effecting a settlement of the dispute is to ascertain how the idol itself is marked, whether as favouring the Vadakalai or Tenkalai. But this has been found hitherto impossible, I am told, for instance at Conjeveram itself, the head-quarters of these disputes, owing to the unreliable and contradictory character of the evidence produced in the Courts.”

The Hebbar and Mandya sections belong to the Mysore Province, in which the former are very numerous. The latter are few in number, and confined to Mandya and Melkote. Some families have settled in the city of Madras, where they are employed as merchants, bank clerks, attorneys, etc. The Mandyas say that they migrated to Mysore from some place near Tirupati. Though both the Hebbar and Mandya Brahmans speak Tamil, some details peculiar to Carnatakas are included in the marriage ceremonial.



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The **Vaishnava Sholiars** are considered somewhat low in the social scale. Inter-marriage takes place between Smartha and Vaishnavite Sholiars. The Vaikhanasas and **Pancharatras** are temple priests (archakas). Both use as their title Dikshitar. Sometimes they are called **Nambi**, but this term is more used to denote **Satani** temple servants.

Reference may here be made to the **Pattar** Brahmans, who are Tamil Brahmans, who have settled in Malabar. The name is said to be derived from the Sanskrit bhatta.

It is noted, in the Gazetteer of Malabar, that "the Pattars present no peculiarities distinguishing them from the ordinary East Coast Brahmans. Like the latter, they engage in trade and business, and form a large proportion of the official, legal, and scholastic classes. With the exception of one class known as **Chozhiya** or **Arya Pattars**, they wear their kudumi (top-knot) on the back of the head in the east coast fashion, and not on the top and hanging over



the forehead, as is done by the genuine Malayali castes. They also live as a general rule in regular streets or gramams on the east coast plan.

Few **Pattars**, except in the Palghat taluk, are large land-owners. As a class, they have embraced modern educational facilities eagerly, so far as they subserve their material prospects. Both Pattars and **Embrandiris**, but especially the latter, have adopted the custom of contracting **sambandham** (alliance) with Nayar women, but sambandham with the foreign Brahmans is not considered to be so respectable as with Nambudiris, and, except in the Palghat taluk (where the Nambudiri is rare), they are not allowed to consort with the women of aristocratic families."

In connection with the Arya Pattars, it is recorded, in the Travancore Census Report, 1901, that "the term Aryapattar means superior Brahmans. But the actual position in society is not quite that. At Ramesvaram, which may be





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considered the seat of Aryapattars, their present status seems to be actually inferior, due probably, it is believed, to their unhesitating acceptance of gifts from Sudras, and to their open assumption of their priestly charge. Though at present a small body in Malabar, they seem to have once flourished in considerable numbers. In the case of large exogamous but high-caste communities like the Kshatriyas of Malabar, **Brahmin husbands were naturally in great requisition**, and when, owing to their high spiritual ideals, the Brahmins of Malabar were either **Grihasthas** or **Snatakas** (bachelor Sanyasins dedicating their life to study, and to the performance of orthodox rites), the supply was probably unequal to the demand.

“The scarcity was presumably added to when the differences between the **Kolattunat** Royal Family and the Brahmins of the **Perinchellur gramam** became so pronounced as to necessitate the importing of Canarese and Tulu



Brahmins for priestly services at their homes and temples. The first immigration of Brahmins from the east coast, called Aryapattars, into Malabar appears to have been under the circumstances above detailed, and at the instance of the Rajas of Cranganore.

“With the gradual lowering of the Brahminical ideal throughout the Indian Peninsula, and with the increasing struggle for physical existence, the **Nambutiris entered or re-entered the field**, and ousted the Aryapattars first from consortship, and latterly even from the ceremony of tali-tying in families that could pay a Nambutiri.

“The **Aryapattar has, in his turn, trespassed into the ranks of the Nayars**, and has begun to undertake the religious rite of marriage, i.e., tali-tying, in aristocratic families among them. There are only two families now in all Travancore, and they live in the Karunagapalli taluk. Malayalam is their household tongue ; in dress and personal habits, they are indistinguishable from Malayala Brahmins. The males marry into as



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high a class of Brahmins as they could get in Malabar, which is not generally higher than that of the Potti.

“The Potti woman thus married gets rather low in rank on account of this alliance. The daughter of an Aryapattar cannot be disposed of to a Brahminical caste in Malabar. She is taken to the Tinnevely or Madura district, and married into the regular Aryapattar family according to the rites of the latter. The girl's dress is changed into the Tamil form on the eve of her marriage.”

III. **Andhra**.—The Telugu-speaking Brahmans are all Andhras, who differ from Tamil Brahmans in some of their marriage and death ceremonies, female attire, and sectarian marks. **Telugu Brahman women wear their cloth without passing it between the legs**, and the free end of the skirt is brought over the left shoulder. The sect mark consists of three horizontal streaks of sacred ashes on the forehead, or a single streak of sandal paste





(**gandham**).

In the middle of the streak is a circular black spot (**akshintalu** or **akshintalu bottu**). The marriage badge is a circular plate of gold, called **bottu**, attached to a thread, on which black glass beads are frequently strung.

A second **bottu**, called **nagavali bottu**, is tied on the bride's neck on the **nagavali day**. During the time when the bridegroom is performing the **vrata** ceremony, the bride is engaged in the worship of Gauri. She sits in a new basket filled with paddy (unhusked rice) or cholam (*Andropogon Sorghum*). On the return from the mock pilgrimage (**kasiyatra**), the bride and bridegroom sit facing each other on the dais, with a screen interposed between them. Just before the **bottu** is tied on the bride's neck by the bridegroom, the screen is lowered. During the marriage ceremony, both the bride and bridegroom wear clothes dyed with turmeric, until the **nagavali day**.

Among Tamil Brahmans, the bridegroom



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wears a turmeric-dyed cloth, and the bride may wear a silk cloth. Immediately after the tying of the bottu, the contracting couple throw rice over each other, and those assembled pour rice over their heads. This is called **Talambralu**.

Taken as a class, the Telugu Brahmans are very superstitious, and the females perform a very large number of vratams. Of the vratams performed by Teluofu and Canarese females, both Brahman and non-Brahman, the following account is given in the Manual of the Nellore district.

A very favourite deity is **Gauri**, in honour of whom many of the rites hereafter noticed are performed. These ceremonies give a vivid idea of the hopes and fears, the aspirations, and the forebodings of Hindu womanhood. The following ceremonies are practised by girls after betrothal, and before union with their husbands : —

**Atlataddi**.—On the third day after the full moon, an early meal before sunrise, the



worship of Gauri in the afternoon, and the presentation of ten cakes to ten matrons upon the dismissal of the deity invoked. The object is to secure a young agreeable husband.

**Uppu** (salt).—This consists in making a present to any matron of a pot of salt, full to the brim, at the end of the year, with the view to secure a long enjoyment of the married state.

**Akshayabandar**.—This consists in making a present of a pot full of turmeric to any matron at the end of the year, with a view to avert the calamity of widowhood.

**Udayakunkuma**.—Putting the red kunkuma mark on the foreheads of five matrons before sunrise, with the object of being always able to wear the same mark on her own forehead, i.e., never to become a widow.

**Padiharukudumulu**.—The presentation of sixteen cakes once a year for sixteen years to a matron. This is for the attaining of wealth.

**Kartika Gauri Devi**.—Exhibiting to a matron





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the antimony box, with a preparation of which the eyes are trimmed to give the brilliancy, and wearing on the head turmeric rice (**akshatalu**). The object of this is said to be to give sight to blind relatives.

**Kandanomi.**—Abstaining for a year from the use of arum (*Amorphophallus Campanulatus*), of which the corms are an article of food), and presenting a matron with a silver and gold representation of a kanda to be worn on the neck. The object to be attained is that she who performs the rite may never have to shed tears.

**Gummadi Gauri Devi.**—The presentation at the end of the year to a matron of a pumpkin in the morning, and another in the afternoon, with a silver one at food time, and a gold one to be worn round the neck. This is for the prolongation of married life.

**Gandala Gauri Devi.**—The distribution of twenty-five different sorts of things, twenty-five to be distributed to matrons at the rate of five of



each sort to each. The object of this is to avert evil accidents of all kinds, which may threaten the husband.

**Chittibottu.**—Making the kunkuma marks on the foreheads of five matrons in the morning, for the attainment of wealth.

**Isalla Chukka.**—Rubbing butter-milk, turmeric, kunkuma, and sandalwood paste on the threshold of the door. The object is the same as in the last.

**Tavita Navomi.**—To avoid touching bran for any purpose, for the prolongation of married life.

**Nitya Srungaram.**—Offering betel nut, and putting the kunkuma mark on the face of a matron, for the purpose of securing perpetual beauty.

**Nallapusala Gaiuri Devi.**—The presentation to a matron of a hundred black beads with one gold one, the object being again to avert widowhood.



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**Mocheti Padmam.**—The worship of some deity, and the making of the forehead mark (**bottlu**) for four matrons in the first year, eight in the second, and so on, increasing the number by four each year for twentyseven years, being the number of certain stars. This presentation has to be made in silence. The object is the attainment of enduring wealth.

**Mogamudo sellu.**—The performer washes her face thirteen times daily in a brass vessel, and offers to some matron some rice, a pearl, and a coral.

**Undrallatadde.**—On the thirteenth day after the full moon, taking food before sunrise, the girl worships the goddess Gauri in the afternoon, and, at the time of dismissing the deity invoked (**udyapana**), she presents five round cakes to as many matrons. The object of this is to secure her future husband's affections.

**Vara Lakkshmi.**—The worship of the goddess Lakshmi for the attainment of wealth





and salvation, or to make the best of both worlds.

**Vavila Gauri Devi.**—In order to avert the risk of all accidents for her future lord, the devotee, on each of the four Tuesdays of the month Sravana, worships the goddess Gauri Devi, and distributes Bengal gram to married women.

**Savitri Gatiri Devi.**—The offering of nine different articles on nine different days after the sun has entered the solstice, the sign of Capricorn. This is also practised to secure a husband's affection.

**Tsaddikutimangalavaram.**—This is a piece of self-mortification, and consists in eating on every Tuesday for one year nothing but cold rice boiled the previous day, and feeding a matron with the same.

The following are some of the ceremonies practised by young women after attaining a marriageable age:—



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**Prabatcha Adivaram.**—Offering worship to a married couple, and limiting the taking of food to a single meal on Sunday. This is done with the object of having children.

**Apadalení Adivaram.**—Taking but one meal every Sunday, and making a presentation to five matrons of five cakes with a flat basket of rice, body jackets, and other things. This is for the procuring of wealth.

**Adivaram** [Sunday).—Total abstinence from some one article of food for one year, another article the next year, and so on for five years ; also limitation to a single meal every Sunday, and the presentation of cloths to Brahmans upon the dismissal of the deity invoked for worship. The object of this seems to be to secure re-union with the husband after death.

**Chappitti Adivaram.**—Abstinence from salt on every Sunday for a year, with a view to secure the longevity of children.

**Udayapadmam.**—To take for one year a



daily bath, and to draw the representation of a lotus with rice-flour every morning near the sacred tulasi plant (*Ocimum sanctum*), which is kept in many Hindu households, growing on an altar of masonry. The object of this is to restore a dead husband to life again, i.e., to secure re-union in another life.

**Krishna Tulasi.**—To avert widowhood, those who perform this rite present thirteen pairs of cakes in a gold cup to a Brahman.

**Kartika Chalimidi.**—The distribution of chalimidi, which is flour mixed with sugar water, for three years ; in the first year one and a half seer of rice, in the second year two and a half seers, and in the third year twenty-six seers, the object sought being to restore life to children that may die, i.e., restoration in another world.

**Kailasa Gauri Devi.**—To grind one and a half viss (a measure) of turmeric without assistance in perfect silence, and then distribute it among loi matrons, the object being to avert





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widowhood.

**Dhairya Lakshmi.**—As a charm against tears, matrons light a magic light, which must have a cotton wick of the weight of one pagoda (a gold coin), and, instead of a quarter of a viss of ghee, clarified butter.

**Dhanapalalu.**—Giving four different sorts of grain for five years to a Brahman, to atone for the sin of the catamenial discharge.

**Nadikesudu.**—The distribution of five seers each of nine different sorts of grain, which must be dressed and eaten in the house. This is done for the procuring of wealth.

**Nityadhanyamu.**—Daily giving a handful of grain to any Brahmin with the object of averting widowhood.

**Phalala Gauri Devi.**—This is performed by the presentation of sixteen fruits of sixteen different species to any married woman, with the view of securing healthy offspring.

**Pamidipuvulu.**—With the view to avert



widowhood and secure influence with their husbands, young wives practise the daily worship of thirteen flowers for a time, and afterwards present to a Brahmin the representations of thirteen flowers in gold, together with a lingam and panavattam (the seat of the lingam).

**Muppadimudupurnamulu.**—To avert widowhood, cakes are offered on the occasion of thirty-three full-moons ; on the first one cake is eaten, on the second two, and so on up to thirty-three.

**Mudukartelu.**—For the attainment of wealth, women light seven hundred cotton wicks steeped in oil at the three festivals of full moon, **Sankuratri** (the time when the sun enters the zodiacal sign of Capricorn), and Sivaratri.

**Magha Gauri Devi.**—The worship of the goddess Gauri in the month of Magham, with a view to avert widowhood.

**Vishmikanta.**—For the same purpose,



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thirteen pairs of cakes are offered in a new pot to some married woman.

**Vishnuvidia.**—To atone for the sin of the catamenial discharge, food is eaten without salt on the second day after every new moon.

**Sokamuleni Somavaram.**—The taking of food without salt every Monday, for the restoration of children removed by death.

**Chitraguptulu.**—Burning twelve wicks daily in oil, for the attainment of happiness in a future state.

**Sukravaram.**—For the acquisition of wealth, women sometimes limit themselves to one meal on Fridays, and feed five married women on each occasion of dismissing the deity invoked for worship.

**Saubhagyatadde.**—To avert widowhood, another practice is on the third day after every new moon to distribute, unassisted and in silence, one and a quarter viss of turmeric among thirteen matrons.





**Kshirabdhī Dvādasi.**—Keeping a fast day specially devoted to the worship of Vishnu, with a view to secure happiness in a future state.

**Chinuku.**—A woman takes a stalk of Indian corn fresh pulled up, and with it pounds rice-flour mixed with milk in a mortar. This is to avert widowhood in this world, and to secure happiness in the next.

Women who have lost children frequently perform the following two ceremonies for restoration to life or restoration in a future state :  
—

**Kundella Amavasya** (hare's new moon).—To give thirteen different things to some married woman every new moon for thirteen months.

**Kadupukadalani Gatirī Devī.**—The presentation of thirteen pairs of cakes to thirteen matrons.

The following ceremonies are often performed after the cessation of the catamenial discharge, to atone for the sin contracted by their



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occurrence : —

**Annamumuttani Adivaram.**—The eating of yams and other roots every Sunday for three years, or, under certain conditions, a longer period.

**Rushipanchami.**—On the fifth day of Bhadrapada month to eat five balusu (*Canthium parviflorum*) leaves, and to drink a handful of ghee.

**Gomayani.**—To eat three balls of cow-dung every morning for a year.

**Lakshvattulu.**—To burn one lac (100,000) of wick lights.

**Lakshmivarapu Ekadasi.**—From the time when the eleventh day after new moon falls on a Thursday, to observe a fast, and to worship the tulasi plant for eleven days.

**Margasira Lakshmivaram.**—The mistress of a family will often devote herself to the worship of Lakshmi on every Thursday of the month of Margasira, in order to propitiate the goddess of



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wealth.

**Somisomavaram.**—A special worship performed on every new moon that falls on Monday, with the giving away of 360 articles, two or three on each occasion. This is performed with the view of attaining atonement for sins, and happiness in a future state.

There are many ceremonies performed by women to whom nature has denied the much-coveted joys of maternity. Among these may be noted : —

**Asvadhapradakshinam.**—In villages is often to be seen a margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*) tree, round which a pipul tree (*Ficus religiosa*) has twined itself. The ceremony consists in a woman walking round and round this tree several times daily for a long period."

The sub-divisions of the Telugu Brahmans are as follows :





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<i>A.—Vaidiki.</i>	
1. Murikinādu.	6. Vēginādu.
2. Telaganyam.	7. Konesime.
3. Velnādu.	8. Ārama Drāvida.
4. Kasalnādu.	9. Ārādhyā.
5. Karnakammalu.	10. Prathamāsāki.
<i>B.—Niyogi.</i>	
1. Āruvela.	4. Pesalavayalu.
2. Nandavarikulu.	5. Prānganādu.
3. Kammalu.	
<i>C.—Tambala.</i>	
<i>D.—Immigrants.</i>	
1. Pudur Drāvida.	2. Thummagunta Drāvida.

All these sections are endogamous, and will eat together, except the Tambalas, who correspond to the Gurukkals among the Tamil Brahmans. Vaidikis are supposed to be superior to Niyogis. The former do not generally grow moustaches, while the latter do. For sradh ceremonies, Niyogis do not generally sit as Brahmans representing the ancestors, Vaidikis being engaged for this purpose.

In some places, e.g., the Nandigama taluk of the Kistna district, the Niyogis are not referred to by the name Brahman, Vaidikis being so called. Even Niyogis themselves point to Vaidikis when asked about Brahmans.

Velnadu, Murikinadu, and Veginadu seem to be territorial names, and they occur also among some of the non-Brahman castes. The



**Aradhyas** are dealt with in a special article (see Aradhya). Among the **Karnakammās** are certain sub-sections, such as **Ogoti** and **Koljedu**. They all belong to **Rig Saka**.

Of the **Telaganyams**, some follow the Rig Veda, and others the Yejur Veda (both black and white Yajus). The **Nandavarikulu** are all Rig Vedis, and regard **Chaudeswari**, the goddess of the Devangas, as **their tutelary deity**.

When a Nandavariki Brahman goes to a Devanga temple, he is treated with much respect, and the Devanga priest gives up his place to the Nandavariki for the time being. The Nandavariki Brahmans are, in fact, gurus or priests to the Devangas.

A special feature of the Telugu Brahmans is that, like the Telugu non-Brahman classes, they have house names or intiperulu, of which the following are examples :—**Kota** (fort), **Lanka** (island), **Puchcha** (*Citrullus Colocynthis*), **Chintha** (tamarind), **Kaki** (crow).



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Niyogi house-names sometimes terminate with the word *razu*.

IV. **Carnataka**.—The sub -divisions of the Carnatakas or Canarese-speaking Brahmans are as follows :

<i>A.—Smartha.</i>	
1. Aruvaththuvokkālū.	5. Kamme (Bobburu, Karna, and Ulcha).
2. Badaganādu.	6. Sīrnādu.
3. Hosalnādu.	7. Māraka.
4. Hoisanige or Vaishanige.	
<i>B.—Mādhva.</i>	
1. Aruvēla.	4. Pennaththūrar.
2. Aruvaththuvokkalu.	5. Prathamāsāki.
3. Badaganādu.	6. Hyderabadī.

The Carnatakas very closely resemble the Andhras in their ceremonial observances, and, like them, attach much importance to **vratams**. The **Madhva** Carnatakas are recent converts from Carnataka or Andhra Smarthas.

The **Pennaththurars** are supposed to be Tamil Brahmans converted into Madhvas. They retain some of the customs peculiar to the Tamil Brahmans. The marriage badge, for example, is the Tamil tali and not the bottu.

Intermarriages between Smarthas and Madhvas of the same section are common. Madhvas, excepting the very orthodox, will take food with both Carnataka and Andhra





Smarthas.

The Marakas are thus described by Mr. Lewis Rice.\* "A caste claiming to be Brahmans, but not recognised as such. They worship the Hindu triad, but are chiefly Vishnuvites, and wear the trident mark on their foreheads.

\* Mysore and Coorg Gazetteer, 1877.

“They call themselves **Hale Kannadiga** or **Hale Karnataka**, the name **Marka**\* being considered as one of reproach, on which account also many have doubtless returned themselves as Brahmans of one or other sect. They are said to be descendants of some disciples of Sankaracharya, the original guru of Sringeri, and the following legend is related of the cause of their expulsion from the Brahman caste to which their ancestors belonged.

\* Said to be derived from ma, a negation, and arka, sun, in allusion to their not performing the adoration of that luminary which is customary among Brahmans.



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“One day Sankaracharya, wishing to test his disciples, drank some toddy in their presence, and the latter, thinking it could be no sin to follow their master's example, indulged freely in the same beverage. Soon after, when passing a butcher's shop, Sankaracharya asked for alms ; the butcher had nothing but meat to give, which the guru and his disciples ate. According to the Hindu shastras, red-hot iron alone can purify a person who has eaten flesh and drunk toddy. Sankaracharya went to a blacksmith's furnace, and begged from him some red-hot iron, which he swallowed and was purified. The disciples were unable to imitate their master in the matter the red-hot iron, and besought him to forgive their presumption in having dared to imitate him in partaking of forbidden food.

“Sankaracharya refused to give absolution, and cursed them as unfit to associate with the six sects of Brahmans. The caste is making a strong effort to **be readmitted among Brahmans**, and some have recently become disciples of



**Parakalaswami.** Their chief occupations are agriculture, and Government service as **shanbogs** or village accountants."

It is recorded, in the Mysore Census Report, 1891, that "some of the more intelligent and leading men in the clan give another explanation (of the legend). It is said that either in Dewan **Purnaiya's** time, or some time before, a member of this micro-caste rose to power, and persecuted the people so mercilessly that, with characteristic inaptitude, they gave him the nickname Maraka or the slaughterer or destroyer, likening him to the planet Mars, which, in certain constellations, is astrologically dreaded as wielding a fatal influence on the fortunes of mortals.

“There is, however, no doubt that, in their habits, customs, religion and ceremonials, these people are wholly Brahmanical, **but still they remain entirely detached from the main body of the Brahmans.** Since the census of 1871, the Hale Kannadigas have been strenuously





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struggling to get themselves classified among the Brahmans. About 25 years ago, the Sringeri Math issued on behalf of the Smarta portion of the people a **Srimukh** (papal bull) acknowledging them to be Brahmans.

“A similar pronouncement was also obtained from the Parakal Math at Mysore about three years later on behalf of the **Srivaishnavas** among them. And the Local Government directed, a little after the census of 1881, that they should be entered as Brahmans in the Government accounts.”

The Madhva Brahmans commence the marriage ceremony by asking the ancestors of the bridal couple to bless them, and be present throughout the performance of the rites. To represent the ancestors, a **ravike** (bodice) and **dhotra** (man's cloth) are tied to a stick, which is placed near the box containing the salagrama stone and household gods.

In consequence of these ancestors being represented, orthodox **Vaidiki** Brahmans refuse



to take food in the marriage house. When the bridegroom is conducted to the marriage booth by his future father-in-law, all those who have taken part in the Kasiyatra ceremony, throw rice over him. A quaint ceremony, called **rangavriksha** (drawing), is performed on the morning of the second day.

After the usual playing with balls of flowers (**nalagu** or **nalangu**), the bridegroom takes hold of the right hand of the bride, and, after dipping her right forefinger in turmeric and chunam (lime) paste, traces on a white wall the outline of a plantain tree, of which a sketch has previously been made by a married woman.

The tracing goes on for three days. First the base of the plant is drawn, and, on the evening of the third day, it is completed by putting in the flower spikes. On the third night the bridegroom is served with sweets and other refreshments by his mother-in-law, from whose hands he snatches the vessels containing them. He picks out what he likes best, and scatters the



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remainder about the room.

The pollution caused thereby is removed by sprinkling water and cow-dung, which is done by the cook engaged for the marriage by the bridegroom's family. After washing his hands, the bridegroom goes home, taking with him a silver vessel, which he surreptitiously removes from near the gods. Along with this vessel he is supposed to steal a rope for drawing water, and a rice-pounding stone.

But in practice he only steals the vessel, and the other articles are claimed by his people on their return home. Branding for religious purposes is confined to Sri Vaishnavas and Madhvas. Sri Vaishnava Brahmans are expected to undergo this ordeal at least once during their life-time, whereas Madhva Brahmans have to submit to it as often as they visit their guru (head of a mutt).

Of men of other castes, those who become followers of a Vaishnava or Madhva Acharya (guru) or mutt, are expected to present





themselves before the guru for the purpose of being branded. But the ceremony is optional, and not compulsory as in the case of the Brahmans.

Among Sri Vaishnavites, the privilege of branding is confined to the elder members of a family, Sanyasis (ascetics), and the heads of the various mutts. All individuals, male and female, must be branded, after the **Upanayanam** ceremony in the case of males, and after marriage in the case of females.

The disciples, after a purificatory bath and worship of their gods, proceed to the residence of the Acharya or to the mutt, where they are initiated into their religion, and branded with the chakra on the right shoulder and chank on the left. The initiation consists in imparting to the disciple, in a very low tone, the **Mula Mantram**, the word **Namonarayanaya**, the sacred syllable Om, and a few mantrams from the Brahma Rahasyam (secrets about god).

A person who has not been initiated thus is



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regarded as unfit to take part in the ceremonies which have to be performed by Brahmans. Even close relations, if orthodox, will refuse to take food prepared or touched by the uninitiated.

Concerning Madhvas, Monier Williams writes as follows\*: "They firmly believe that It is a duty of Vaishnavas to carry throughout life a memorial of their god on their persons, and that such a lasting outward and visible sign of his presence helps them to obtain salvation through him. *'On his right armlet the Brahman wears the discus, on his left the conch shell.'*

When I was at Tanjore, I found that one of the successors of Madhva had recently arrived on his branding visitation. He was engaged throughout the entire day in stamping his disciples, and receiving fees from all according to their means."

Madhvas have four mutts to which they repair for the branding ceremony, viz., **Vayasaraya**, **Sumathendra** and **Mulabagal** in Mysore, and **Uttaraja** in South Canara.



The followers of the Uttaraja mutt are branded in five places in the case of adult males, and boys after the thread investiture.

The situations and emblems

selected are the chakra on the right upper arm, right side of the chest, and above the navel ; the chank on the left shoulder and left side of the chest.

Women, and girls after marriage, are branded with the chakra on the right forearm, and the chank on the left. In the case of widows, the marks are impressed on the shoulders as in the case of males. The disciples of the three other mutts are generally branded with the chakra on the right upper arm, and chank on the left.

As the branding is supposed to remove sins committed during the interval, they get it done every time they see their guru. There is with Madhvas no restriction as to the age at which the ceremony should be performed. Even a newborn babe, after the pollution period of ten





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days, must receive the mark of the chakra, if the guru should turn up. Boys before the upanayanam, and girls before marriage, are branded with the chakra on the abdomen just above the navel.

The copper or brass branding instruments (mudras) are not heated to a very high temperature, but **sufficient to singe the skin, and leave a deep black mark in the case of adults,** and a light mark in that of young people and babies. In some cases, disciples, who are afraid of being hurt, **bribe the person** who heats the instruments ; but, as a rule, the guru regulates the temperature so as to suit the individual. If, for example, the disciple is a strong, well-built man, the instruments are well heated, and, if he is a weakling, they are allowed to cool somewhat before their application.

If the operator has to deal with babies, he presses the instrument against a wet rag before applying it to the infant's skin.

Some **Matathipathis** (head priests of the mutt)



are, it is said, inclined to be vindictive, and to make a very hot application of the instruments, if the disciple has not paid the fee (**gurukanika**) to his satisfaction. The fee is not fixed in the case of Sri Vaishnavas, whereas Madhvas are expected to pay from one to three months' income for being branded.

Failure to pay is punished with excommunication on some pretext or other. The area of skin branded generally peels off within a week, leaving a pale mark of the mudra, which either disappears in a few months, or persists throughout life. Madhvas should stamp mudras with **gopi** paste (white kaolin) daily on various parts of the body.

The names of these mudras are **chakra**, **chank** or **sankha**, **gatha** (the weapon of war used by Bhima, one of the Pandavas), **padma** (lotus), and **Narayana**. The chakra is stamped thrice on the abdomen above the navel, twice on the right flank, twice on the right side of the chest above the nipple, twice on the right arm,



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once on the right temple, once on the left side of the chest, and once on the left arm.

The chank is stamped twice on the right side of the chest, in two places on the left arm, and once on the left temple. The gatha is stamped in two places on the right arm, twice on the chest, and in one spot on the forehead. The padma is stamped twice on the left arm, and twice on the left side of the chest. Narayana is stamped on all places where other mudra marks have been made.

Sometimes it is difficult to put on all the marks after the daily morning bath. In such cases, a single mudra mark, containing all the five mudras, is made to suffice. Some regard the chakra mudra as sufficient on occasions of emergency.

The god Hanuman (the monkey god) is specially revered by Madhvas, who call him Mukyapranadevaru (the chief god).

V. Tulu—The Tulu-speaking Brahmans are, in





their manners and customs, closely allied to the Carnatakas. Their sub-divisions are:

1. Shivalli.	4. Havik or Haiga.
2. Kōta.	5. Panchagrami.
3. Kandāvara.	6. Kōtēswar.

The following interesting account of the Tulu Brahmans is given by Mr. H. A. Stuart \*:

\* Manual of the South Canara district.

“All Tulu Brahmin chronicles agree in ascribing the creation of Malabar and Canara, or Kerala, **Tuluva**, and **Haiga**, to **Parasu Rama**, who reclaimed from the sea as much land as he could cover by hurling his battle-axe from the top of the Western Ghauts.

“According to Tulu traditions, after a quarrel with Brahmins who used to come to him periodically from **Ahi-Kshetra**, Parasu Rama procured new Brahmins for the reclaimed tract by taking the nets of some fishermen, and making a number of Brahminical threads, with which he invested the fishermen, and thus turned them into Brahmins, and retired to the



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mountains to meditate, after informing them that, if they were in distress and called on him, he would come to their aid.

“After the lapse of some time, during which they suffered no distress, they were curious to know if Parasu Rama would remember them, and called upon him in order to find out. He promptly appeared, but punished their thus mocking him by cursing them, and causing them to revert to their old status of Sudras. After this, there were no Brahmins in the land till Tulu Brahmins were brought from Ahi- Kshetra by Mayur Varma of the Kadamba dynasty.

“A modified form of the tradition states that Parasu Rama gave the newly reclaimed land to **Naga** and **Machi** Brahmins, who were not true Brahmins, and were turned out or destroyed by fishermen and **Holey**as (Pariahs), who held the country till the Tulu Brahmins were introduced by Mayur Varma. All traditions unite in attributing the introduction of the Tulu Brahmins of the present day to Mayur Varma, but they



vary in details connected with the manner in which they obtained a firm footing in the land.

“One account says that **Habashika**, chief of the Koragas (Pariahs), drove out Mayur Varma, but was in turn expelled by Mayur Varma's son, or son-in-law, **Lokaditya** of Gokarnam, who brought Brahmins from Ahi-Kshetra and settled them in thirty-two villages.

“Another makes Mayur Varma himself the invader of the country, which till then had remained in the possession of the Holeyas (Pariahs) and fishermen who had turned out Parasu Rama's Brahmins.

“Mayur Varma and the Brahmins whom he had brought from Ahi-Kshetra were again driven out by **Nanda**, a Holeyachief, whose son **Chandra Sayana** had, however, learned respect for Brahmins from his mother, who had been a dancing-girl in a temple. His admiration for them became so great that he not only brought back the Brahmins, but actually made over all his authority to them, and reduced his people to the





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position of slaves.

“A third account makes Chandra Sayana, not a son of a Holeyia king, but a descendant of Mayur Varma and a conqueror of the Holeyia king. Nothing is known from other sources of Lokaditya, Habashika, or Chandra Sayana, but inscriptions speak to Mayur Varma being the founder of the dynasty of the Kadambas of Banavasi in North Canara. His date is usually put down at about 750 A.D.

“The correctness of the traditions, which prevail in Malabar as well as in Canara, assigning the introduction of Brahmins to the West Coast to Mayur Varma who was in power about 750 A.D., is to some extent corroborated by the fact that Brahmins attested the Malabar Perumal's grant to the Christians in 774 A.D., but not that to the Jews about 700 A.D.

“The Brahmins are said to have been brought from Ahi-Kshetra, on the banks of the Godavari, but it is not clear what connection a Kadamba of Banavasi could have with the banks of the



Godavari, and there may be something in the suggestion made in the North Kanara Gazetteer that Ahi-Kshetra is merely a sanskritised form of **Haiga** or the land of snakes.

“The tradition speaks of the Brahmins having been brought by Lokaditya from Gokarnam, which is in the extreme north of Haiga, and in the local history of the Honalli Matha in Sunda in North Canara, Gokarnam is spoken of as being Ahi-Kshetra. Gokarnam is believed to have been a Brahmin settlement in very early times, and there was probably a further influx of Brahmins there as Muhammadan conquest advanced in the north. ”

“The class usually styled Tulu Brahmins at the present day are the Shivalli Brahmins, whose head-quarters are at Udipi, and who are most numerous in the southern part of the district, but the Kota, Koteswar, and Haiga or Havika Brahmins are all branches of the same, the differences between them having arisen since their settlement in Canara ; and, though



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they now talk Canarese in common with the people of other parts to the north of the **Sitanadi** river, their religious works are still written in the old Tulu-Malayalam character.

“Tulu Brahmins, who have settled in Malabar in comparatively late years, are known as **Embrantris**, and treated as closely allied to the Nambutiris, whose traditions go back to Mayur Varma. **Some families of Shivalli and Havika Brahmins in the southern or Malayalam portion of the district talk Malayalam, and follow many of the customs of the Malabar or Nambutiri Brahmins.**

“Many of the thirty-two villages in which the Brahmins are said to have been settled by Mayur Varma are still the most important centres of Brahminism. Notably may be mentioned Shivalli or Udipi, Kota and Koteswar, which have given names to the divisions of Tulu Brahmins of which these villages are respectively the head-quarters. When the Brahmins were introduced by Mayur





Varma they are said to have been followers of Bhattacharya, but they soon adopted the tenets of the great Malayalam Vedantic teacher Sankaracharya, who is ordinarily believed to have been born at Cranganore in Malabar in the last quarter of the eighth century, that is, soon after the arrival of the Brahmins on the west coast.

“Sankaracharya is known as the preacher of the Advaita (non-dual) philosophy, which, stated briefly, is that all living beings are one with the supreme spirit, and absorption may finally be obtained by the constant renunciation of material in favour of spiritual pleasure. This philosophy, however, was not sufficient for the common multitude, and his system included, for weaker minds, the contemplation of the first cause through a multitude of inferior deities, and, as various manifestations of Siva and his consort Parvati, he found a place for all the most important of the demons worshipped by the early Dravidians whom the Brahmins found



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on the West Coast, thus facilitating the spread of Hinduism throughout all classes.

“That the conversion of the **Bants** and **Billavas**, and other classes, took place at a very early date may be inferred from the fact that, though the great bulk of the Tulu Brahmins of South Canara adopted the teaching of the Vaishnavite reformer Madhavacharya, who lived in the thirteenth century, most of the non-Brahmin Hindus in the district class themselves as Shaivltes to this day.

“Sankaracharya founded the Sringeri Matha in Mysore near the borders of the Udipi taluk, the guru of which is the spiritual head of such of the Tulu Brahmins of South Canara as have remained Smarthas or adherents of the teaching of Sankaracharya. Madhavacharya is believed to have been born about 1199 A.D. at Kalianpur, a few miles from Udipi.

“He propounded the Dvaita or dual philosophy, repudiating the doctrine of oneness and final absorption held by ordinary



Vaishnavites as well as by the followers of Sankaracharya. The attainment of a place in the highest heaven is to be secured, according to Madhavacharya's teaching, not only by the renunciation of material pleasure, but by the practice of virtue in thought, word and deed.

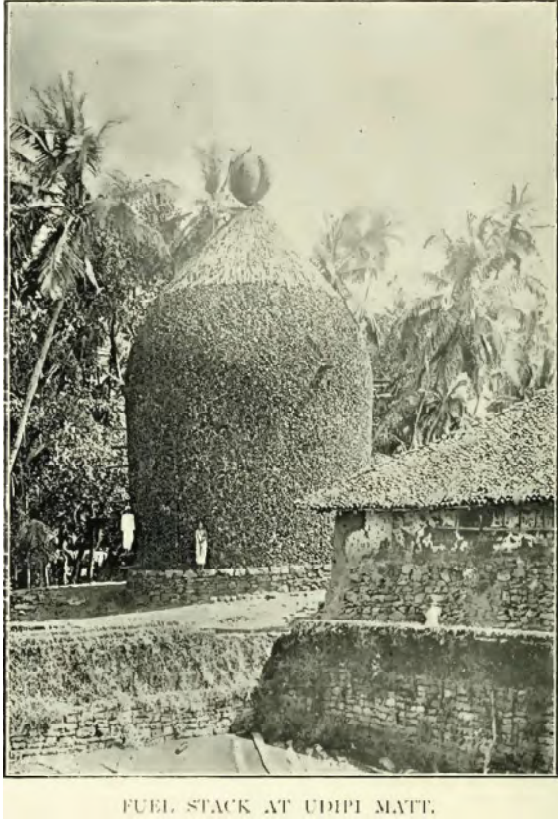
“The moral code of Madhavacharya is a high one, and his teaching is held by some — not ordinary Hindus of course—to have been affected by the existence of the community of Christians at Kalianpur mentioned by **Cosmos Indico Pleustes** in the seventh century.

Madhavacharya placed the worship of Vishnu above that of Siva, but there is little bitterness between Vaishnavites and Shaivites in South Canara, and there are temples in which both are worshipped under the name of **Shankara Narayana**. He denied that the spirits worshipped by the early Dravidians were manifestations of Siva's consort, but he accorded sanction to their worship as supernatural beings of a lower order.





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FUEL STACK AT UDIPPI MATTE.

"Shivalli Brahmins. The Tulu-speaking Brahmins of the present day are almost all followers of Madhavacharya, though a few remain Smarthas, and a certain number follow what is known as

the **Bhagavat Sampradayam**, and hold that equal honour is due to both Vishnu and Siva. They are now generally called Shivalli Brahmins, their head-quarters being at Udipi or Shivalli, a few miles from Madhavacharya's birth-place.

Here Madhavacharya is said to have resided for some time, and composed thirty-seven controversial works, after which he set out on a tour. **The temple of Krishna at Udipi is said to have been founded by Madhavacharya himself, who set up in it the image of Krishna originally made by Arjuna**, and miraculously obtained by him from a vessel wrecked on the coast of Tuluva. In it he also placed one of the three salagrams presented to him by the sage Veda



Vyasa.

Besides the temple at Udipi, he established eight Mathas or sacred houses, each presided over by a sanyasi or swami. [Their names are **Sodhe**, **Krishnapur**, **Sirur**, **Kanur**, **Pejavar**, **Adamar**, **Palamar**, and **Puththige**.]

These exist to this day, and each swami in turn presides over the temple of Krishna for a period of two years, and spends the intervening fourteen years touring through Canara and the adjacent parts of Mysore, levying contributions from the faithful for his next two years of office, which are very heavy, as he has to defray not only the expenses of public worship and of the temple and Matha establishments, but must also feed every Brahmin who comes to the place.

The following description of a Matha visited by Mr. Walhouse \* gives a very good idea of what one of these buildings is like :

\* Fraser's Magazine, May 1875.



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‘The building was two-storeyed, enclosing a spacious quadrangle round which ran a covered verandah or cloister ; the wide porched entrance opened into a fine hall supported by massive pillars with expanding capitals handsomely carved ; the ceiling was also wooden, panelled and ornamented with rosettes and pendants as in baronial halls, and so were the solid doors. Within these was an infinity of rooms, long corridors lined with windowless cells, apartments for meditation and study, store-rooms overflowing with all manner of necessaries, granaries, upper rooms with wide projecting windows latticed instead of glass with pierced wood-work in countless tasteful patterns, and in the quadrangle there was a draw-well and small temple, while a large yard behind contained cattle of all kinds from a goat to an elephant.

‘All things needful were here gathered together. Outside sat pilgrims, poor devotees,





and beggars waiting for the daily dole, and villagers were continually arriving with grain, vegetables, etc.'

The periodical change of the swami presiding over the temple of Krishna is the occasion of a great festival known as the **Pariyaya**, when Udupi is filled to overflowing by a large concourse of Madhvas, not only from the district but from more distant parts, especially from the Mysore territory. [A very imposing object in the temple grounds, at the time of my visit in 1907, was an enormous stack of fire-wood for temple purposes.]

The following is a description\* of a festival at the Udupi Krishna temple witnessed by Mr. Walhouse : 'Near midnight, when the moon rode high in a cloudless heaven, his (Krishna's) image—not the very sacred one, which may not be handled, but a smaller duplicate—was brought forth by four Brahmins and placed under a splendid canopy on a platform laid across two large canoes. The whole square of



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the tank (pond) was lit up by a triple line of lights. Small oil cressets at close intervals, rockets and fireworks ascended incessantly, and the barge, also brilliantly lit up, and carrying a band of discordant music, and Brahmins fanning the image with silver fans, was punted round and round the tank amid loud acclamations. After this, the image was placed in a gorgeous silver-plated beaked palanquin, and borne solemnly outside the temple to the great idol car that stood dressed up and adorned with an infinity of tinsel, Hags, streamers and flower wreaths.

‘On this it was lifted, and placed in a jewel shrine amidst a storm of applause and clapping of hands—these seem the only occasions when Hindus do clap hands—and then, with all the company of Brahmins headed by the swamis marching in front, followed by flambeaus and wild music, the car was slowly hauled by thousands of votaries round the square which was illuminated by three lines of lights,



ascending at intervals into pyramids.

‘A pause was made half-way, when there was a grand display of rockets, fire fountains and wheels, and two lines of camphor and oiled cotton laid along the middle of the road were kindled and flamed up brilliantly. Then the car moved on to the entrance of the temple, and the god's outing was accomplished.’

Another famous temple of the Shivallis is **Subramanya** at the foot of the ghauts on the Coorg border, and here also Madhavacharya deposited one of **Veda Vyasa's** salagrams. It existed before his time, however, and, as the name indicates, it is dedicated to the worship of Siva. In addition to this, it is the principal centre of serpent worship in the district.

"Many of the Shivalli Brahmins are fair complexioned with well-cut intelligent features. A number of them own land which they cultivate by tenants or by hired labourers, and there are several wealthy families with large landed properties, but the great bulk of them are either





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astronomers, astrologers, tantris, purohitas, worshippers in temples, or professional beggars. They have been backward in availing themselves of English education, and consequently not many of them are to be found holding important posts under Government or in the professions, but a few have come to the front in late years. A good many of them are village accountants and teachers in village schools. The women, as is usually the case among all classes, are fairer than the men. Their education is even more limited, but they are said to be well trained for the discharge of household and religious duties.

“They wear the cloth falling as low as the feet in front, but not usually so low behind, especially on festive occasions, the end being passed between the legs and tucked into the fold of the cloth round the waist. Like all Brahmin women in Canara, they are fond of wearing sweet-scented flowers in their hair. The language of the Shivalli Brahmins is Tulu,



except to the north of the Sitanadi river, where close intercourse with the ruling Canarese classes above the ghauts for several centuries has led to the adoption of that language by all classes. Their religious books are in Sanskrit, and, even north of the Sitanadi river, they are written in the **old Tulu-Malayalam character**. Their houses are all neat, clean, and provided with verandahs, and a yard in front, in which stands, in a raised pot, a plant of the tulasi or sacred basil.

“Some of the houses of the old families are really large and substantial buildings, with an open courtyard in the centre. Men and widows bathe the whole body every day before breakfast, but married women bathe only up to the neck, it being considered inauspicious for them to bathe the head also. In temples and religious houses, males bathe in the evening also. An oil bath is taken once a week. They are, of course, abstainers from animal food and spirituous liquors, and **a prohibition extends to**



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some other articles, such as onions, garlic, mushrooms, etc.

“At times of marriages, deaths or initiations, it is usual to give feasts, which may be attended by all Dravida Brahmins. The Shivallis have 252 gotras, and the names of the following seem to be of totemistic origin : —

**Kudrettaya**, from kudre, a horse, taya, belonging to.

Talitaya, palmyra palm.

Manolitaya, name of a vegetable.

Shunnataya, chunam, lime.

Kalambitaya, a kind of box.

Nellitaya, the Indian gooseberry.

Goli, banyan tree.

Ane, elephant.

"These names were obtained from one of the eight swamis or gurus of the Udipi math, and according to him they have no totemistic force at the present day. Girls must be married before maturity, and the ordinary age now-a-days is





between five and eleven. The age of the bridegroom is usually between fifteen and five and twenty. A maternal uncle's daughter can be married without consulting any horoscope, and during the marriage ceremonies it is customary for a bridegroom's sister to obtain from him a formal promise that, if he has a daughter, he will give her in marriage to her son.

“Widows take off all their ornaments, and wear a red or white cloth. They ought not to attend any auspicious ceremonies or festivals, but of late years there has been a tendency to relax the severity of the restrictions on a widow's freedom, and a young widow is allowed to keep her head unshaven, and to wear a few ornaments.

“A few Shivallis in the Malayalam-speaking portion of the Kasaragod taluk follow the customs and manners of the Malayalam Brahmins, and amongst these a girl does not lose caste by remaining unmarried until she comes of age.



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"Koteswar Brahmins are a small body, who take their name from Koteswar in the Coondapoor taluk. They are practically the same as the Shivalli Brahmins, except that, like all classes in that taluk, they talk Canarese.

“**Havika, Haviga, or Haiga** Brahmins are the descendants of the section of the Brahmins brought in by Mayur Varma, who settled within the tract known as Haiga, which comprised the southern part of North Canara and the extreme northern part of South Canara. They did not, like the Shivallis, adopt the teaching of Madhavacharya, but remained followers of Sankaracharya, and they now speak Canarese, though their religious and family records are written in old **Tulu- Malayalam character**. Though originally of the same stock, a distinction has arisen between them and the Shivalli Brahmins, and they do not intermarry, though they may eat together. A number of Havika Brahmins are to be found scattered throughout South Canara, engaged for the most



part in the cultivation of areca palm gardens, in which they are very expert.

“A very well-to-do colony of them is to be found in the neighbourhood of **Vittal** in the Kasaragod taluk, where they grow areca nuts which are valued only second to those grown in the magane of the Coondapoor taluk above the ghauts.

“The Havika Brahmins, perhaps owing to their residing for many generations in the comparatively cool shade of the areca nut gardens, are specially fair even for west coast Brahmins. This fairness of complexion is particularly noticeable in the women, who do not differ much in their manners and customs from the Shivalli Brahmin women, except that they take a prominent part in the work of the gardens, and never on any occasion wear the end of their cloth passed through the legs and tucked up behind.

“The Havik widows are allowed more freedom than in most other classes. Some Havik





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Brahmins in the Malayalam portion of the Kasaragod taluk have, like the Shivallis in the same locality, adopted the language and customs of the Malayali Brahmins.

"Kota Brahmins, so called from a village in the northern part of the Udipi taluk, are, like the Haviks, Smarthas or followers of Sankaracharya, and now speak Canarese, but the breach between them and the Shivallis is not so wide, as intermarriages occasionally take place.

"In the Coondapoor taluk and the northern part of the Udipi taluk, the Kotas occupy a place in the community corresponding to that taken by the Shivallis throughout the rest of the district.

"**Saklapuris**, of whom there are a few in the district, are what may be called a dissenting sect of Havikas who, a few years ago, renounced their allegiance to the Ramchandrapura matha in favour of one at Saklapuri near the boundary between North and South Canara. Like the Havikas, they speak



Canarese.

"Kandavaras obtain their name from the village of Kandavar in the Coondapoor taluk. They are commonly known as Udapas, and they all belong to one gotram, that of **Visvamitra**. They are, therefore, precluded from marrying within the caste, and take their wives and husbands from the ranks of the Shivalli Brahmins. They are, indeed, said to be the descendants of a Shivalli Brahmin who settled in Kandavar about seven or eight centuries ago. The head of the **Annu Udapa** family, which is called after this ancestor, is the hereditary head of the caste, and presides over all panchayats or caste councils. They speak Canarese. Their title is **Udapa** or Udpa."

In a note on the Brahmans of South Canara, Mr. T. Raghaviah writes as follows\*:—"The **sentimental objection to manual labour**, which is so predominant in the East Coast Brahmin, and the odium attached to it in this country, which has crystallised into the religious belief that, if a



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Brahmin cultivates with his own hand, the fire of his hand would burn down all that he touches, have entirely disappeared in South Canara. In the rural parts of the district, and especially at the foot of the Western Ghats, it is an exceedingly common sight to see Brahmins engaging themselves in digging, ploughing or levelling their lands, trimming their watercourses or ledges, raising anicuts across streams, and doing a hundred other items of manual work connected with agriculture. Brahmin women busy themselves with cutting green leaves for manure, making and storing manure and carrying it to their lands or trees, and Brahmin boys are employed in tending and grazing their own cattle. This is so much the case with a class of Brahmins called Haviks that there is a proverb that none but a Havik can raise an areca garden. You find, as a matter of fact, that nearly all the extensive areca plantations in the district are in the hands of either the Havik Brahmins or the Chitpavans allied much to the





Mahratta Brahmins of Bombay. These plantations are managed by these Brahmins, and new ones are raised with the aid of a handful of Holeyas, or often without even such aid."

\* Indian Review, VII, 1906.

VI. Oriya.—The Oriya Brahmans of the Ganjam district belong to the **Utkala** section of the Pancha Gaudas. Between them and the **Pancha Dravidas** there is very considerable difference. None of the sections of the Pancha Dravidas adopt the gosha system as regards their females, whereas Oriya Brahman women are kept **gosha** (in seclusion). Occasionally they go out to bring water, and, if on their way they come across any males, they go to the side of the road, and turn their backs to the passers-by. It is noted, in the Manual of the Vizagapatam district, that Oriya Brahmans "**eat many kinds of meat, as pea fowl, sambur (deer), barking deer, pigeons, wild pig, and fish.**"



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Fish must be one of the dishes prepared on festive occasions. As a rule, Oriya Brahmans will accept water from a **Gaudo** (especially a **Sullokondia Gaudo**), and sometimes from Gudiyas and Odiyas. **Water touched by Dravida Brahmans is considered by them to be polluted.** They call the Dravidas **Komma** (a corruption of Karma) Brahmans.

The Oriya Brahmans are more particular than the Dravidas as regards the *madi* cloth, which has already been referred to. A cloth intended for use as a *madi* cloth is never given to a washerman to be washed, and it is not worn by the Oriya Brahmans when they answer the calls of nature, but removed, and replaced after bathing.

Marriage with a maternal uncle's daughter, which is common among the Dravida Brahmans, would be considered an act of sacrilege by Oriyas.

When an Oriya Brahman is charged with being a meat eater, he retorts that it is not



nearly so **bad as marrying** a **mathulakanya** (maternal uncle's daughter).

The marriage tali or bottu is dispensed with by Oriya Brahmans, who, at marriages, attach great importance to the panigrahanam (grasping the bride's hand) and **saptapadi** (seven steps). The Oriya Brahmans are both Smarthas and V'aishnavas who are generally Paramarthos or followers of Chaitanya. The god **Jagannatha** of Puri is revered by them, and they usually carry about with them some of the prasadam (food offered to the god) from Puri. They are divided into the following twelve sections :

(1) Santo (samanta, a chief).

(2) Danua (gift-taking).

(3) Padhiya (one who learns the Vedas).

(4) Sarua (saru, tubers of the arum *Colocasia antiquorum*).

(5) Holua (holo, yoke of a plough).

(6) Bhodri (Bhadriya, an agraharam on the





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Ganges).

(7) Barua (a small sea-port town).

(8) Deuliya (one who serves in temples).

(9) Kotokiya (kotaka, palace. Those who live in palaces as servants to zamindars).

(10) Sahu (creditor).

(n) Jhadua (jungle).

(12) Sodeibalya (those who follow an ungodly life).

It is recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, that "the **Santos** regard themselves as superior to the others, and will not do purohit's work for them, though they will for zamindars. They are also very scrupulous about the behaviour of their women-kind.

“The **Danuas** live much by begging, especially at the funerals of wealthy persons, but both they and the **Padhiyas** know the Vedas, and are priests to the zamindars and the higher classes of Sudras.

“The **Saruas** cultivate the ‘yam ’ (*Colocasia*),



and the **Holuas** go a step further, and engage in ordinary cultivation—actual participation in which is forbidden to Brahmans by Manu, as it involves taking the lives of worms and insects.

“A few of the Saruas are qualified to act as purohits, but the Holuas hardly ever are, and they were shown in the 1891 census to be the most illiterate of all the Brahmans of the Presidency. Few of them even perform the **Sandhya** and **Tarpana**, which every Brahman should scrupulously observe. Yet they are regarded as ceremonially pure, and are often cooks to the zamindars.

“Regarding the sixth class, the **Bhodris**, a curious legend is related. Bhodri means a barber, and the ancestor of the subdivision is said to have been the son of a barber who was brought up at Puri with some Santo boys, and so learned much of the Vedas and Shastras. He left Puri and went into Jeypore, wearing the thread and passing himself off as a Brahman, and eventually married a Brahman girl, by



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whom he got children who also married Brahmans. At last, however, he was found out, and taken back to Puri, where he committed suicide.

“The Brahmans said they would treat his children as Brahmans if a plant of the sacred tulsi grew on his grave, but, instead of tulsi, a plant of tobacco appeared there, and so his descendants are Bhodris or barber Brahmans, and even **Karnams**, **Gaudos**, and **Mahantis** decline to accept water at their hands. They cultivate tobacco and 'yams,' but nevertheless officiate in temples, and are purohits to the lower non-polluting castes.

“Of the remaining six divisions, the **Baruas** are the only ones who do purohit's work for other castes, and they only officiate for the lower classes of Sudras. Except the **Sodeibalyas**, the others all perform the Sandhya and Tarpana. Their occupations, however, differ considerably. The **Baruas** are pujaris in the temples, and physicians. The **Deuliyas** are



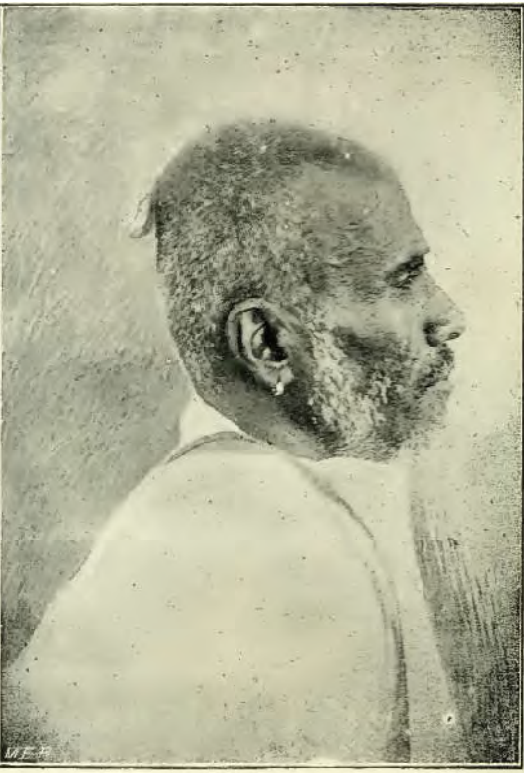


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pujaris and menials in zamindars' houses, growers of ' yams,' and even day labourers. The **Kotokiyas** are household servants to zamindars. The **Sahus** trade in silk cloths, grain, etc., and are money-lenders. The **Jhadas** are hill cultivators, and traders with pack-bullocks. The last of the divisions, the **Sodeibalyas**, are menial servants to the zamindars, and work for daily hire."

VII. **Sarasvat** and **Konkani**.—Both these classes belong to the Gauda branch, and speak the Konkani language. The original habitation of the Konkanis is said to have been the bank of the **Sarasvati**, a river well known in early Sanskrit works, but said to have subsequently lost itself in the sands of the desert, north of Rajputana. As they do not



KONKANI BRAHMAN.

abstain from fish, the other Brahmans among whom they have **settled regard them as low.** The full name as given by the Konkanis is **Gauda Sarasvata**



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### Konkanastha.

All the Konkani Brahmans found in South Canara are Rig Vedis. Like the Shivalli Brahmans, they have numerous exogamous septs, which are used as titles after their names. For example, **Prabhu** is a sept, and Krishna Prabhu the name of an individual. A large majority of the Konkani Brahmans are Madhvas, and their god is Venkataramana of Tirupati, to whom their temples in South Canara are dedicated.

Other Brahmans do not go to the Konkani temples, though non-Brahmans do so. A very striking feature of the Konkani temples is that the god Venkataramana is not represented by an idol, but by a silver plate with the image of the god embossed on it. There are three important temples, at **Manjeshwar**, **Mulki**, and **Karkal**. To these are attached Konkani Brahmans called **Darsanas**, or men who get inspired.

The Darsana attached to the Mulki temple



comes there daily about 11 A.M. After worship, he is given thirtham (holy water), which he drinks. Taking in his hands the prasadam (offering made to the god), he comes out, and commences to shiver all over his body for about ten minutes. The shivering then abates, and a cane and long strip of deer skin are placed in his hands, with which he lashes himself on the back, sides, and head. Holy water is given to him, and the shivering ceases. Those who have come to the temple put questions to the Darsana, which are answered in Konkani, and translated. He understands his business thoroughly, and usually recommends the people to make presents of money or jewels to Venkataramana, according to their means.

In 1907, a rich Guzerati merchant, who was doing business at Mangalore, visited the temple, and consulted the Darsana concerning the condition of his wife, who was pregnant. The Darsana assured him that she would be safely delivered of a male child, and made him





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promise to present to the temple silver equal in weight to that of his wife, should the prophecy be realised. The prediction proving true, the merchant gave silver, sugar -candy, and date fruits, to the required weight at a cost, it is said, of five thousand rupees.

At the Manjeshwar temple, the Darsana is called the **dumb Darsana**, as he gives signs instead of speaking. At a marriage among the Konkanis, for the Nagavali ceremony eight snakes are made out of rice or wheat flour by women and the bridal couple. By the side of the pot representing Siva and Parvati, a mirror is placed. Close to the Nagavali square, it is customary to draw on the ground the figures of eight elephants and eight **Bairavas** in flour.

The following account of the Konkanis is given in the Cochin Census Report, 1901 :—  
"The Konkanis are a branch of the **Sarasvat** sub-division of the **Pancha Gaudas**. Judged from their well-built physique, handsome features and fair complexion, they appear to



belong ethnically to the Aryan stock. The community take their name from their **Guru Sarasvata**.

“**Trihotrapura**, the modern Tirhut in Behar, is claimed as the original home of the community. According to their tradition, Parasu Rama brought ten families, and settled them in villages in and around **Gomantaka**, the modern Goa, **Panchrakosi**, and **Kusasthali**. When Goa was conquered by Vijayanagar, they placed themselves under the protection of the kings of that country. For nearly a quarter of a century after the conquest of Goa by the Portuguese, they continued unmolested under the Portuguese Governors. During this period, they took to a lucrative trade in European goods.

“With the establishment of the **Inquisition at Goa**, and the religious persecution set on foot by the Portuguese, the community left Goa in voluntary exile. While some submitted to conversion, others fled to the north and south. Those that fled to the south settled themselves



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in Canara and at Calicut.

“Receiving a [cold reception at the hands of the Zamorin](#), they proceeded further south, and placed themselves under the protection of the Rulers of Cochin and Travancore, where they flourish at the present day. The Christian converts, who followed in the wake of the first batch of exiles, have now settled themselves at the important centres of trade in the State as copper-smiths, and they are driving a very profitable trade in copperwares. The Brahman emigrants are called Konkani from the fact of their having emigrated from Konkan. In the earliest times, they are supposed to have been Saivites, but at present they are staunch Vaishnavites, being followers of Madhavacharya. They are never regarded as on a par with the other Brahmans of Southern India. There is no intermarriage or interdining between them and other Brahmans.

“In Cochin they are mostly traders. Their occupation seems to have been at the bottom of





their being regarded as degraded. They have their own temples, called **Tirumala Devaswams**. They are not allowed access to the inner structure surrounding the chief shrine of the Malayali Hindu temples ; nor do they in turn allow the Hindus of this coast to enter corresponding portions of their religious edifices.

“The Nambudris are, however, allowed access even to the interior of the sacred shrine. All caste disputes are referred to their high priest, the **Swamiyar of Kasi Mutt**, who resides at **Mancheswaram** or Basroor. He is held in great veneration by the community, and his decisions in matters religious and social are final. Some of their temples possess extensive landed estates. **Their temple at Cochin is one of the richest in the whole State**. The affairs of the temple are managed by **Konkani Yogakkars**, or an elected committee.

“Nayars and castes above them do not touch them. Though their women use coloured cloths



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for their dress like the women of the East Coast, their mode of dress and ornaments at once distinguish them from other Brahman women. Amongst them there are rich merchants and landholders. **Prabhu, Pai, Shenai, Kini, Mallan,** and **Vadhyar**, are some of the more common titles borne by them."

In conclusion, brief mention may be made of several other immigrant classes. Of these, the **Desasthas** are Marathi-speaking Brahmans, who have adopted some of the customs of the Smartha and Madhva Carnatacas, with whom intermarriage is permitted. A special feature of the marriage ceremonies of the Desasthas is the worship of **Ambabhavani** or **Tuljabhavani**, with the assistance of **Gondala** musicians, who sing songs in praise of the deity. The **Chitpavan** Brahmans speak Marathi and Konkani. In South Canara they are, like the Haviks, owners of areca palm plantations. **Karadi** Brahmans, who are also found in South Canara, are said to have come southward from Karhiid in the



Bombay Presidency. There is a tradition that Parasu Rama created them from camel bones.

**Brahmani.**—A class of Ambalavasis. (See Unni.)

**Brihaspati Varada.**—The name, indicating those who worship their god on Thursday, of a sub-division of **Kurubas**.

**Brinjari.**—A synonym of Lambadi.

**Budubudike.**—The Budubudike or Budubudukala are described in the Mysore Census Report as being "gipsy beggars and fortune-tellers from the Marata country, who pretend to consult birds and reptiles to predict future events. They are found in every district of Mysore, but only in small numbers. They use a small kind of double-headed drum, which is sounded by means of the knotted ends of strings attached to each side of it. The operator turns it deftly and quickly from side to side, when a sharp and weird sound is emitted, having a rude resemblance to the warbling of





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birds. This is done in the mornings, when the [charlatan soothsayer](#) pretends to have divined the future fate of the householder by means of the chirping of birds, etc., in the early dawn. They are generally worshippers of Hanumantha."

The name Budubudike is derived from the hour-glass shaped drum, or [budbudki](#).

For the following account of the Budubudukalas, I am indebted to a recent article\* :—

\* Madras Mail, 1907.

"A huge parti-coloured turban, surmounted by a bunch of feathers, a pair of ragged trousers, a loose long coat, which is very often out at elbows, and a capacious wallet underneath his arm, ordinarily constitute the Budubudukala's dress. Occasionally, if he can afford it, he indulges in the luxury of wearing a tiger or cheetah (leopard) skin, which hangs down his back, and contributes to the dignity of his



calling. Add to this an odd assortment of clothes suspended on his left forearm, and the picture is as grotesque as it can be. **He is regarded as able to predict the future of human beings by the flight and notes of birds.**

“His predictions are couched in the chant which he recites. The burden of the chant is invariably stereotyped, and purports to have been gleaned from the warble of the feathered songsters of the forest. It prognosticates peace, plenty and prosperity to the house, the birth of a son to the fair, lotus-eyed house-wife, and worldly advancement to the master, whose virtues are as countless as the stars, and have the power to annihilate his enemies.

“It also holds out a tempting prospect of coming joy in an unknown shape from an unknown quarter, and concludes with an appeal for a cloth. If the appeal is successful, well and good. If not, the Budubudukala has the patience and perseverance to repeat his visit the next day, the day after that, and so on until, in sheer



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disgust, the householder parts with a cloth.

“The drum, which has been referred to above as having given the Budubudukala his name, is not devoid of interest. In appearance it is an instrument of diminutive size, and is shaped like an hour-glass, to the middle of which is attached a string with a knot at the end, which serves as the percutient. Its origin is enveloped in a myth of which the Budubudukala is naturally very proud, for it tells him of his divine descent, and invests his vocation with the halo of sanctity.

“According to the legend, the primitive Budubudukala who first adorned the face of the earth was a belated product of the world's creation. When he was born or rather evolved, the rest of humankind was already in the field, struggling for existence. Practically the whole scheme was complete, and, in the economy of the universe, the **Budubudukala** found himself one too many. In this quandary, he appealed to his goddess mother Amba Bhavani, who took





pity upon him, and presented him with her husband the god **Parameswara's** drum with the blessing 'My son, there is nothing else for you but this. Take it and beg, and you will prosper.'

Among beggars, the Budubudukala has constituted himself a superior beggar, to whom the handful of rice usually doled out is not acceptable. His demand, in which more often than not he succeeds, is for clothes of any description, good, bad or indifferent, new or old, torn or hole. For, in the plenitude of his wisdom, he has realised that a cloth is a marketable commodity, which, when exchanged for money, fetches more than the handful of rice.

“The Budubudukala is continually on the tramp, and regulates his movements according to the seasons of the year. As a rule, he pays his visit to the rural parts after the harvest is gathered, for it is then that the villagers are at their best, and in a position to handsomely remunerate him for his pains. But, in whatever corner of the province he may be, as the



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Dusserah approaches, he turns his face towards Vellore in the North Arcot district, where the annual festival in honour of the tribal deity Amba Bhavani is celebrated."

"The insigne of the Budubudike, as recorded at Conjeeveram, is said\* to be a pearl-oyster.

\* J. S. F. Mackenzie, Ind. Ant, IV, 1875.

"The Oriya equivalent of Budubudike is stated\* to be **Dubaduba**.

\* Madras Census Report, 1901.

**Bujjinigiyoru** (jewel-box).—A sub-division of **Gangadikara Vakkaliga**.

**Bukka**.—Described, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as a "sub-caste of Baliya. They are sellers of saffron (turmeric), red powder, combs, etc., and are supposed to have been originally Komatis." They are described by the Rev. J. Cain as travelling about selling turmeric, opium, and other goods. According to the



legend, when **Kanyakamma** threw herself into the fire-pit (sec Komati), they, instead of following her example, presented to her **bukka** powder, turmeric, and **kunkuma**. She directed that they should live apart from the faithful Komatis, and live by the sale of the articles which they offered to her.

**Buragam.**—A sub-division of Kalingi.

**Burgher.**—A name commonly applied to the Badagas of the Nilgiri hills. In Ceylon, Burgher is used in the same sense as **Eurasian in India**.

**Burmese.**—A few Burmese are trained as medical students at Madras for subsequent employment in the Burmese Medical service. At the Mysore census, 1901, a single Burman was recorded as being engaged at the Kolar gold fields. Since Burma became part of the British dominions in 1886, there has been emigration to that developing country from the Madras Presidency on a large scale. The following figures show the numbers of passengers conveyed thence to Burma during the five





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years, 1901—05 :

1901	...	...	...	...	...	84,329
1902	...	...	...	...	...	80,916
1903	...	...	...	...	...	100,645
1904	...	...	...	...	...	127,622
1905	...	...	...	...	...	124,365

**Busam** (grain).—An exogamous sept of DOvanga.

**Busi** (dirt).—An exogamous sept of Mutracha.

**Byagara**.—Byagara and Begara are synonyms of Holey.

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